



COMING TO AMERICA

(ZAMUNDA PROJECT)
#32157

SCREENPLAY
BY

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STORY BY EDDIE MURPHY

FINAL SHOOTING SCRIPT
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FADE IN:

1 THE STUDIO LOGO ...

1

appears over the familiar landscape of the Paramount mountain. The logo fades, but, surprisingly, the image of the mountain lingers.

We hear BEAUTIFUL AFRICAN DRUMS as we slowly PUSH IN on the mountain.

BLACK NARRATOR
In a land far, far away ...

We ascend the snow-covered peak, crossing up and over to a magical land on the other side, a land of lush tropical jungle. LIONS roar, MONKEYS play and ELEPHANTS trumpet.

BLACK NARRATOR (CONT'D)
... there once lived a prince who
was much like you and me ...

In the distance is a lavish palace, a vision so perfect it could only exist in a fairy tale.

BLACK NARRATOR (CONT'D)
... except that he lived helluva
lot better.

TITLE SEQUENCE:

2 EXT. ROYAL BARN --- DAY

2

The King's ROOSTER looks down on the kingdom, a regal haughty bird. He CROWS.

3 INT. ROYAL HENHOUSE - DAY

3

A plump HEN sits on a mink-lined nest in an ornately gilded cage. She lays an egg. It rolls down a gleaming brass chute onto a velvet pillow. A SERVANT wearing white gloves picks up the egg.

4 ANGLE TO REVEAL

4

Row upon row of identically splendid cages, each hen living in a fabulous condo of her own. If Liberace had kept chickens, this is how they would have lived.

5 INT. ROYAL KITCHEN - DAY

5

CLOSE ON AN EGG as a CHEF cracks it into a large gold mixing bowl. He whips the eggs with a whisk. As we PULL BACK we see a dozen MORE CHEFS preparing a breakfast fit for a king.

6 EXT. ROYAL GARDENS - DAY

6

Dozens of crisply-uniformed SERVANTS pick big beautiful oranges from the royal trees. GIRAFFES, ZEBRAS and FLAMINGOS roam the grounds.

A SERVANT GIRL picks luscious strawberries, snipping their stems with a pair of sterling scissors.

7 INT. ROYAL BAKERY - DAY

7

The BAKER removes a golden loaf of bread from the oven. On the oven door is the ornate royal crest of Zamunda.

8 INT. ROYAL BARN - DAY

8

A SERVANT milks the royal DAIRY COW in an incredibly fancy stall decorated in a Laura Ashley country motif with dainty flowered wallpaper. In this kingdom, the barnyard animals live better than Candy Spelling.

9 INT. KITCHEN - DAY

9

CHEFS are chopping, dicing, slicing, conjuring up omelettes, pancakes and souffles.

10 INT. PALACE HALLWAY - DAY

10

A dozen tuxedoed MUSICIANS tiptoe silently down the hallway carrying oboes, violins and flutes. They wear special cushioned slippers so as not to make the slightest sound.

The CONDUCTOR opens a massive door and the musicians follow him into ...

11 INT. PRINCE'S SLEEPING CHAMBER - DAY

11

It's about the size of the lobby of the Plaza Hotel, only more ornate. In the center of the room is a bed so enormous you could land a 747 on it.

12 CLOSE ON PRINCE AKEEM (EDDIE)

12

He is sleeping peacefully in the middle of the immense bed, every hair in place, wearing luxurious silk pajamas.

13 THE CONDUCTOR

13

glances at a CLOCK as it ticks silently toward eight. Right on cue, he raises his baton and the musicians begin to PLAY a soothing, lilting MELODY.

14 PRINCE AKEEM

14

His eyelids flutter as he awakens for another day in paradise. He gets out of bed, but before he touches the floor, a SERVANT places silken slippers on his feet. Akeem stands up. As he stretches, ANOTHER SERVANT slips a brocaded silk robe over his royal shoulders.

15 ANGLE ON DOOR

15

MORE SERVANTS enter the room, including the head servant OHA.

SERVANTS
(in unison)
Good morning, Your Highness.

OHA
Happy birthday, Your Highness.

Akeen nods half-heartedly. He strolls across the room. As he goes, ROSE BEARERS move ahead of him, tossing petals in his path.

16 THE ROYAL VANITY

16

Akeen stares into the mirror. He opens his mouth. A servant brushes his teeth with an ivory toothbrush. Akeem bends down, out of FRAME, to spit. He reappears. Another servant pats his lips dry with a little towel. Still another servant places a crystal cup to Akeen's lips. He sips some mouthwash and tilts his head back, opening his mouth. A servant gently jiggles Akeem's adam's apple. This is a man who doesn't even have to gargle for himself.

17 INT. PRINCE'S BATHROOM - DAY

17

about the size of the Lincoln Memorial, but with more marble. Akeem soaks in the royal tub as two nubile MAIDENS wash him. A third Maiden pops her head up from under the water.

MAIDEN
The royal penis is clean, Your Highness.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

Akeem takes this in stride, because for him this is a daily ritual.

18 INT. PRINCE'S DRESSING CHAMBER - DAY

18

Akeem sits on a throne, the center of a flurry of activity. Servants trim his moustache, do his nails, and carefully brush his princely uniform. A ROYAL HAIRDRESSER combs Akeem's "prince's lock", a long braid of hair which hangs from one side of his head.

Akeem wrinkles his nose as if he's about to sneeze. Instantly, a dozen silk handkerchief are thrust in front of him. But it's only a false alarm. Akeem waves them away, gets up and heads towards the bathroom. Half a dozen servants follow.

AKEEM
Just once, do you think I could
use the bathroom by myself?

The Servants LAUGH at the absurdity of the idea.

OHA
(respectfully)
Very amusing, sir.
(CLAPPING his hands)
Wipers!

Four Servants follow the Prince into the bathroom.

TITLES END

19 INT. PALACE HALLWAY - DAY

19

Akeem strolls down the stately hallway preceded by Rose Bearers.

OHA
His majesty must be very excited.

AKEEM
Why is that, Oha?

OHA
Today is your twenty-first
birthday. Which means you meet
your wife today for the first
time. This does not excite you?

AKEEM
I am curious. How can a man be
excited about a woman he's never
seen?

20 INT. IMPERIAL DINING ROOM - DAY

20

Massive. The table alone is the length of a tennis court. Seated at one end are Akeem's parents, KING Jaffe Joffer and QUEEN Aoleon.

Akeem sits at the other end of the table, barely nibbling at his food.

KING
(to the Queen)
He certainly is quiet this morning.

QUEEN
He looks sad.

The King presses an intercom button and talks into it. (This is a real long table.)

KING
(into the intercom)
Is something troubling you, my son?

AKEEM
(into the intercom)
No, father.

KING
(into the intercom)
Son, please. I am more than the exalted ruler of this land and the master of all I survey. I am also a concerned dad.

AKEEM
(into the intercom)
Well, father ...
(gets up)
Just a minute.

Akeem starts walking to the other end of the table. Everyone is shocked.

QUEEN
What is he doing? *

KING
It looks as if he is coming down here to speak to us.
(stopping him in his tracks)
Wait right there, Akeem!
(more)

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

KING (Cont'd)
(in a booming voice)
Rose Bearers!

As Akeem walks, ROSE PETALS ARE THROWN IN HIS PATH.

21 ANGLE ON KING

21

He reaches his father.

KING (CONT'D)
Now what is it, son?

AKEEM
Well first of all it is things
like that.

KING
Like what?

AKEEM
The rose petals.

QUEEN
What's wrong, dear? You are the
son of the King. Why should you
not walk on the petals of roses?

AKEEM
If there were no roses I'd still
be son of the King.

KING
Then it is solved.
(blustering)
From this day forth, anyone who
throws roses at my son's feet will
answer to me!

The Rose Bearers quickly begin picking up the petals.

AKEEM
It's just not the roses, Father,
it's everything ... the pampering
... the dressing ... the feeding
... the bathing ...
(catching himself)
Actually, I rather like the
bathing.

KING
So?

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

AKEEM

Just once I'd like to cook for myself, clean for myself, wipe my own backside. And why can't I pick a wife for myself?

KING

Ahhh, so that is it. We have gone to a great deal of trouble to pick you out a very fine wife. Since the day she was born she has been taught to walk, and speak and think like a queen.

*

AKEEM

(sitting down next to
his father)

But what if I don't love her?

KING

It is normal to feel anxiety about meeting your queen.

*

QUEEN

I was terrified when I first met your father.

KING

I must admit I was frightened too.

QUEEN

I was so nervous I became nauseous. But over the years I have grown to love your father very much.

KING

You see, son, there is a very fine line between love and nausea.

AKEEM

I don't want her to love me because of who I am. I want her to love me because of what I am.

KING

And what are you?

AKEEM

A man who has never even tied his shoes.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (2)

21

KING

Wrong. You are a PRINCE who has never tied his shoes. Believe me. I tied my own shoes once. It is an over-rated experience.

22 ANGLE ON AKEEM

22

From out of nowhere, WHOOSH, a spear lands with a THUD in the back of Akeem's chair, inches from his ear. Akeem springs up, striking a defensive pose. He smiles at his attacker.

23 ANGLE ON SEMMI

23

He is the son of a general in the King's army. Semmi's role in life is to serve as the Prince's closest friend and constant companion.

SEMMI
(cheerfully)
Good morning!

KING

(mildly annoyed)
Semmi, how many times do I have to tell you. If you want to throw spears, throw them in the game room.

SEMMI
Sorry, Your Majesty.

Semmi approaches the Queen. Something about him reminds us of Eddie Haskell, especially the way he sucks up to the royal family.

SEMMI (CONT'D)
You look especially radiant today,
Your Grace.

QUEEN
(onto his game)
Is that so, Semmi?

SEMMI
I was just remarking to my mom the other day, "what lovely skin the queen has!"

QUEEN
Isn't there somewhere you should be going?

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

SEMMI

Yes, I was just about to take
young Akeem here for his daily
workout. Have a nice day, Your
Majesties.

(to Akeem as they leave)
What happened to the rose bearers?

24 INT. GAME ROOM - DAY

24

Akeem and Semmi stand in the middle of the enormous room
preparing to practice Bondo ... an ancient African martial art.
They twirl long fighting sticks, taunting each other.

SEMMI

Now, let's see if you can defend
yourself. You sweat from a
baboon's balls.

AKEEM

Your words cannot hurt me. You
brown ring around a jackal's ass!

They SCREAM a WAR CRY and go at each other tooth and nail.
Their fight is underscored by ORCHESTRA MUSIC.

Semmi thrusts in with an extremely menacing attack.

SEMMI

So you are saying that you can
have a woman who will obey your
every command, and you would
rather have one who has an
opinion?

AKEEM

(blocking the attack
masterfully)

Only dogs are to obey. A wife's
opinion should be valued if you
truly love each other.

Semmi swipes at Akeem's head three times. Akeem ducks.

SEMMI

Hippopotamus shit. You are heir
to the throne of Zamunda. Your
wife need only have a beautiful
face, nice breasts and a firm
backside.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

24

Akeem goes on the offensive, backing Semmi across the room. They pass by the same MUSICIANS who are now underscoring the fight with exhilarating MUSIC.

AKEEM

So you would share your bed and fortune with a beautiful fool.

Semmi returns the assault.

SEMMI

That is the way it has always been with men of power. It is tradition.

In three swift moves, Akeem deflects the attack, knocks the stick out of Semmi's hand, and executes a spinning sweep-kick which sends Semmi crashing butt-first to the floor.

AKEEM

(pinning Semmi to the floor)

It is also tradition that times must ... and always do change.

25 OMITTED

25*

26 OMITTED

26*

27 OMITTED

27*

28 EXT. ROYAL LAKE - DUSK

28

The Prince and Semmi are fishing, rowed by SERVANTS in a splendid boat across a beautiful sun-dappled lake. Oha holds Akeem's fishing rod for him.

AKEEM

I want a wife, not another servant.

29 UNDER THE WATER BENEATH THE BOAT

29

Two SERVANTS wearing snorkels and masks hold their breath as they put a big beautiful rainbow trout onto the Prince's hook.

30 BACK IN THE BOAT

30

OHA

I believe you've caught one, Your Highness.

Oha reels in the fish.

31 EXT. ROYAL PALACE - NIGHT

31

Fireworks explode in the air as limos pull up in front of the palace. Klieg lights fill the sky. It's one helluva party. Everyone who is anyone in Zamunda is there. HAWKERS sell souvenirs to the Royal Event.

HAWKER

(holding up a t-shirt
with Akeem's face)

Heeeeey! Get your Royal Engagement
T-Shirt!

32 INT. ROYAL BALLROOM - NIGHT

32

The ball of balls is in full swing. The King and Queen are seated on their thrones. Akeem stands next to them, looking extremely dapper in his courtship attire. Standing behind him is his best man, Semmi.

We HEAR three tremendous GONGS. All the guests return to their seats. A MAN wearing military attire bows before the royal family.

MILITARY MAN

Your Majesty, I am Colonel Izzi.
Today with your blessing, I offer
my daughter to your son.

KING

My blessing is granted. Let the courtship commence!

TRUMPETEERS sounding a majestic FANFARE.

Akeem's eyes are fixed on the massive double doors in nervous anticipation. They open. Akeem swallows as a WOMAN carrying a nosegay of flowers walks into the room. In a word, she's a beast, at least 300 pounds. She approaches the royal family. Colonel Izzi beams with pride. Akeem looks horrified.

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

32

FAT WOMAN
 (lifting her veil to
 reveal a most
 unattractive toothy
 smile)
 Greetings, great prince.

Akeem looks ill. TRUMPET FANFARE.

FAT WOMAN (CONT'D)
 Presenting
 (DRUM ROLL)
 ... Miss Imani Izzi!

33 ANGLE ON DANCING GIRLS

33

MUSIC: TRIBAL DRUMS

A dozen BEAUTIFUL GIRLS enter dancing to the beat of the drums. They wear elaborate African hadresses and carry staffs topped with brightly colored feathers. They form a double line and lift their staffs to reveal ...

34 IMANI IZZI

34

the queen to be, a vision in a fabulous white gown. She has long black hair, her skin the color of caramel. Her eyes are seductive and black as coal.

Throughout the crowd we hear "oohs and ahhs", as she walks down the long aisle towards Akeem. Suddenly Oha begins to sing in a high tenor voice --

OHA
 (singing)
 SHE'S YOUR QUEEN TO BE ...
 A QUEEN TO BE FOREVER ...
 A QUEEN WHO'LL DO WHATEVER
 HIS HIGHNESS MAY DESIRE.

SHE'S YOUR QUEEN TO BE
 THE VISION OF PERFECTION ...
 AN OBJECT OF AFFECTION ...
 TO QUENCH YOUR ROYAL FIRE.

COMPLETELY FREE OF INFECTION
 TO BE USED AT YOUR DISCRETION
 WAITING ONLY FOR YOUR... DIRECTION
 YOUR QUEEN TO BE!

She curtsies deeply to the Prince. All eyes turn towards Akeem. The moment has come for him to ask the question.

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

34

The King and Queen are beaming.

AKEEM
(to Imani)
Can I uh ... talk to you alone
for a moment?
(to the crowd)
Excuse us.

The King and Queen are startled. The Crowd buzzes in nervous disbelief.

35 INT. ROYAL ANTEROOM - MOMENTS LATER

35

Akeem and Imani are alone.

IMANI
Am I not all you dreamed I would
be?

AKEEM
You're fine ... beautiful ... I
just wanted to speak to you.
After all, we are to be married.
So ... tell me about yourself.

IMANI
Ever since I was born I've been
trained to serve you

AKEEM
No, I know that. I want to know
about YOU. What do YOU like to
do?

IMANI
Whatever you like to do.

AKEEM
What kind of music do you like?

IMANI
Whatever kind of music you like.

AKEEM
(losing it)
I know what I like. I want to
know what YOU like.
(calming down)
Listen, I have a command.
(more)

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED:

35

AKEEM (Cont'd)

From now on I want you to stop
trying to please me. Do not obey
me. Understand?

(she nods)

Now tell me, what is your favorite
food?

Imani doesn't answer.

AKEEM (CONT'D)

Why will you not answer me?

(still no response)

Answer me!

IMANI

You told me not to obey you, so
I could not answer.

AKEEM

(exasperated)

Are you telling me you will do
anything I say?!

IMANI

Yes, your highness.

AKEEM

Bark like a dog.

IMANI

Arf! Arf! Arf!

AKEEM

A big dog.

IMANI

Woof! Woof!

AKEEM

Hop on one leg.

(she hops)

Now make a sound like an
orangutan!

IMANI

(still hopping)

I do not know what they sound
like.

AKEEM

Improvise.

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED: (2)

35

Imani starts flapping her lips, making CHIMP SOUNDS, hopping on one foot. The King enters.

KING
Ah! I see the two of you are getting along.

AKEEM
Will you excuse us, Imani?

Imani hops out of the room.

KING
Fine girl, isn't she? I told you there was nothing to be worried about.

AKEEM
Father, about this wedding ...

Oha pokes his head into the room.

OHA
The guests are waiting, Your Majesty.

KING
Let them wait. I am talking to my son.
(to Akeem)
Come, let us go for a stroll.

36 EXT. PALACE GARDEN - NIGHT

36

CLOSE ON Akeem and his father as they move through the lush gardens. The King holds a leash.

KING
Time does seem to fly fast, my son. It seems like only yesterday I ordered your first diaper changed.

We PULL BACK to reveal that the King is walking his pet lion.

KING (CONT'D)
And now you are a man who is about to be married. She will give you much pleasure, don't you think?

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

36

AKEEM
 But I am not sure if I am
 ready ...

KING
 (putting it together)
 Oh ... I see. Son, I know we
 never had a talk about this. I
 always assumed you had sex with
 your bathers. I know I do.

AKEEM
 It is not that. I am 21 and
 I have never been outside Zamunda.
 I have yet to experience what
 the outside world has to
 offer.

KING
 Ah, so you want to sow your royal
 oats!

AKEEM
 That is not ...

KING
 You are right, my son. Get out.
 See the world. Enjoy yourself.
 Fulfill every erotic desire.
 And in forty days you will come
 back and marry Imani.

AKEEM
 But, father ...

KING
 It is settled.

CUT TO:

37 INT. THE HUGE BALLROOM - NIGHT

37

The King and Akeem stride in.

KING
 May I have your attention, please!
 The wedding will proceed in forty
 days! You may go home now!
 Goodnight!
 (to Oha)
 Oha, prepare the royal baggage! My
 son is going on a trip!

*

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED:

37

OHA
Prepare the royal baggage!

38 INT. PALACE HALLWAY - NIGHT

38

Akeem and Semmi are walking hurriedly down the hallway.

SEMMI
This trip is an excellent idea.
Forty days of fornication!

Akeem stops and looks around to make sure no one is listening.

AKEEM
Semmi, I have something else in mind. Tell no one of this. I intend to find a bride.

SEMMI
What is wrong with the one you have now? When you saw her, tell me you did not want to rip her clothes off right then and there.

AKEEM
But I want a woman who will arouse my intellect as well as my loins.

SEMMI
Where will you find such a woman?

AKEEM
In America.

SEMMI
(clapping his hands excitedly)
Yes!

They enter ...

39 INT. LIBRARY - NIGHT

39

Akeem opens an atlas to a map of the United States.

SEMMI (CONT'D)
The land is so big. The choices so infinite. Where shall we go?
Los Angeles or New York?

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

39

AKEEM
Let fate decide.
(taking out a coin)
Heads, New York. Tails, Los Angeles.

Akeem flips the coin.

40 INSERT - THE COIN

40

It's heads. (Akeem's own princely image is on the face of the coin.)

41 BACK TO SCENE

41

AKEEM (CONT'D)
Heads. We go to New York.

SEMMI
But where in New York can one find
a woman of grace, elegance, taste
and culture? A woman suitable
for a King.

They look at a map of the five boroughs of New York. Akeem and Semmi smile. They have found the answer.

AKEEM
Queens!

42 EXT. SKY OVER NEW YORK - DAY

42

A 747 makes its approach toward JFK. Below, the Manhattan skyline looks monumental, magical.

43 INT. J.F.K. AIRPORT TERMINAL --DAY

43

Akeem and Semmi walk through the luggage area. As they go, TRAVELERS seem to step out of their way, amazed by their fine robes and regal bearing.

AKEEM
Remember Semmi, no one here can
know I am royalty. We must appear
no different than the average man.

Trailing behind them is a procession of SKYCAPS pushing a row of luggage carts piled high with royal baggage.

Akeem and Semmi step outside.

44 EXT. TERMINAL - DAY

44

Akeem walks directly into the path of an oncoming taxi, raising his hand in a princely manner.

AKEEM

Halt!

The taxi SCREECHES to a stop.

CABBIE

You dumb fuck!

AKEEM

Take us to Queens at once.

(taking out a huge wad
of money)

We will make it worth your while.

CABBIE

(suddenly very friendly)

No problem. But I gotta charge
you extra for the bags.

AKEEM

Of course.

CABBIE

(pointing to the money)

Just gimmie four or five of those.

Akeem gives him several hundred-dollar bills.

45 EXT. VAN WYCK EXPRESSWAY - DAY

45

The cab groans out of the airport, a moving mountain of luggage. Bags are hanging out the windows, bulging out of the trunk, lashed to the fenders, stacked in an eight-foot heap on the roof.

46 INT. CAB - MOVING - EXPRESSWAY - DAY

46

CABBIE

You sure you want to go to Queens?
A coupla rich guys like you should
be in Manhattan, staying at the
Plaza or the Palace.

SEMMI

The Palace. That sounds good.
Take us there.

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED:

46

AKEEM
 No, I want Queens. And we are
 not rich. We are ordinary African
 students.

CABBIE
 (not buying it)
 Whatever you say, pal. What part
 of Queens you want?

AKEEM
 (proudly)
 The most common part.

CABBIE
 That's easy. If there's one thing
 Queens has got a lot of, it's
 common parts.

46A EXT. QUEENS BLVD. OFF RAMP - DAY

46A*

Cab drives on Queens Blvd. off ramp.

*

47 EXT. TENEMENT STREET - DAY

47

A graffiti-covered train ROARS overhead on elevated tracks.
 We CRANE DOWN to reveal the cab, parked in front of a row of
 dilapidated buildings. The cabbie has stacked all the luggage
 on the sidewalk in front of a run-down tenement built over an
 old-fashion neighborhood barbershop. A sign says "Room For
 Rent. Daily. Weekly. Monthly".

CABBIE
 This shitty enough for you?

AKEEM
 Perfect.

The Cabbie checks the meter.

48 INSERT - TAXI METER

48

It reads, "\$30".

49 BACK TO SCENE

49

CABBIE
 That'll be three hundred dollars.

AKEEM
 But your meter says thirty.

CABBIE
 It's after eight. There's a
 surcharge. You multiply by ten.

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED:

49

Akeem gives him the money. The CAB PULLS AWAY. Akeem surveys his surroundings. Every kind of blight known to urban life is within walking distance. Akeem is filled with wonder.

AKEEM
Fascinating!

He sees a broken bottle lying in a gutter.

AKEEM (CONT'D)
Look, Semmi!

Akeem picks up a piece of glass, staring in amazement.

AKEEM (CONT'D)
(reverentially)
America is great indeed. Imagine
a country so free one can throw
glass on the street.

On the ground floor of the tenement, the barber shop is still open. Somebody is arguing inside.

AKEEM (CONT'D)
(in awe)
Listen. Real Americans.

50 INT. THE "MY-T SHARP" BARBER SHOP - DAY

50

The head barber, a contentious old man named CLARENCE (EDDIE), is cutting a YOUNG MAN'S hair while arguing with SWEETS, an old black man who is getting a trim in the next chair. MORRIS (ARSINIO), a sullen barber with a thin little Cab Calloway moustache, is eating lunch, sopping corn bread in a plate of collard greens. An elderly Jewish man (Eddie), sits reading a magazine.

SWEETS
Pound for pound, Sugar Ray
Robinson the best fighter that
ever lived!

CLARENCE
Bullshit. What about Joe Louis?!
The Brown Bomber. Now that
muthafucka could fight!
(finishing the Young
Man's hair)
That'll be eight dollars.

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED:

50

YOUNG MAN
(fumbling for his
wallet)
Oh ... wait ... \$8 ... wow ...
oh shit ... I left my wallet ...
look, I'm gonna run and get my
wallet and get your money.

CLARENCE
I tell you what. Before you go.
Here.

He cuts a big clump of the Young Man's hair and holds it up.

CLARENCE (CONT'D)
When you bring your money your
hair be here.

The Young Man runs out of the barber shop.

51 EXT. TENEMENT STREET - DAY

51

He runs past Akeem and Semmi as they walk to the tenement door.

Akeem rings the buzzer marked "landlord". The LANDLORD comes to the door, a balding black man who looks as every bit as nasty as the tenement. He scowls at them through a thick glass security door.

LANDLORD
What the fuck you want?

AKEM
We desire a room.

LANDLORD
You better not be wastin' my time.
You got money?

Akeem shows him the wad of bills. The Landlord instantly changes his attitude.

LANDLORD (CONT'D)
(cheerfully)
Come on in, gentlemen.

52 INT. TENEMENT VESTIBULE - DAY

52

Akeem and Semmi enter, leaving the stack of luggage behind them.

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED:

52

LANDLORD (CONT'D)
 S'cuse me if I was brusque.
 Sometimes we get boo-boos in here
 without a dollar to their name.
 But obviously you gentlemen came
 in on another boat.

AKEEM
 We seek meager accommodations.

LANDLORD
 S'cuse me?

AKEEM
 We require a room that is very
 poor.

LANDLORD
 You saying you want a place that's
 fucked up?

AKEEM
 In a manner of speaking.

LANDLORD
 We'll you come to the right place.
 You can look all you want, but
 I guarantee you, you will never
 find a place more fucked up than
 this.

The landlord is telling the truth. The walls are covered with graffiti, the floors littered with refuse.

LANDLORD (CONT'D)
 (bragging)
 The whole fifth floor is nothing
 but junkies. Come on, I'll show
 you.

53 ANGLE PAST THEM TO THE SIDEWALK - DAY

53

As Akeem and Semmi walk up the stairs, we see some guys sneaking off with their luggage. *

54 INT. TENEMENT STAIRWELL - DAY

54

A DRUNK falls down the stairs past Akeem and Semmi.

LANDLORD
 Hey, Stu! You know your rent is
 due, muthafucka. Don't be pullin
 that fallin' down the stairs shit
 on me! You're conscious.

55 INT. TENEMENT FIFTH FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY

55

It looks like the fifth floor of hell.

LANDLORD (CONT'D)

(proudly)

Here we are!

(pointing to a door)

Now, there's only one bathroom
on this floor. You gotta share
it.

The Landlord opens the bathroom door. It's filthy.

LANDLORD (CONT'D)

We got a little bit of an insect
problem. But you from Africa,
you probably used to it.

He shuts the bathroom door.

LANDLORD (CONT'D)

Another thing, don't take the
elevator. It's a deathtrap.

The Landlord walks to a door which is crisscrossed with yellow
police tape. He rips it off.

LANDLORD (CONT'D)

Now this is the place I was
telling you about. It's real
fucked up. Got just one window
facing a brick wall. Used to rent
it to a blind man.

They enter the apartment.

56 INT. TENEMENT APARTMENT - DAY

56

Dark, desolate. The paint on the walls is peeling. The only
window looks out at a brick wall which is bare except for the
word "Pussy!" painted in big white letters. There is no
kitchen, just a second-hand microwave.

On the floor is the chalked outline of a blind man with his
seeing-eye dog lying beside him.

LANDLORD

Damn shame what they did to that
dog.

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED:

56

AKEEM
(enthused by the
squalor)
We will take the room!

Semmi looks sick.

57 INT. TENEMENT APARTMENT - DAY

57

A big RAT. He is in just inches from Semmi who is asleep on the floor. It is morning. Semmi opens his eyes. The rat is staring at him right in the eyes. Semmi leaps to his feet.

SEMMI
Akeem! Akeem!

Akeem is not in the room. Semmi bolts out.

58 INT. TENEMENT FIFTH FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY

58

Semmi starts banging on the bathroom door.

SEMMI
Akeem! We must leave this place immediately.

Akeem opens the door, a towel around his waist, excited.

AKEEM
Out of the question. Never have I felt so liberated. Semmi, I just washed my penis for the first time. It was a most tactile experience.

SEMMI
But Akeem this place is so foul ...

AKEEM
I know! Isn't it wonderful?!

Akeem strides down the hall, opens a window and climbs out.

59 EXT. TENEMENT FIRE ESCAPE - DAY

59

He gazes at the tenements across the alley.

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED:

59

AKEEM

Behold, Semmi ... life. Real
life. A thing we've been denied
too long.

Akeem looks out upon a cacophonous cross section of urban decay.
COUPLES fighting. MOTHERS yelling. KIDS shouting. Glass
BREAKING. Loud LATIN MUSIC.

He joyously shouts to the world, his arms outstretched.

AKEEM (CONT'D)

Good morning, neighbors!

OFF-SCREEN NEIGHBOR

Fuck you!

AKEEM

(deliriously happy)

Fuck you, too!

60 INT. TENEMENT STAIRWELL - DAY

60

Stu the drunk lies on the landing, wearing a royal African robe.
Akeem and Semmi step over him and leave.

61 EXT. TENEMENT STREET - DAY

61

The streets are full of PEOPLE of all races. This is a
multi-ethnic neighborhood. A little BOY zips by on a skateboard
wearing a silk robe. An ELDERLY WOMAN sports a \$2,000 dashiki.
In fact, almost everyone seems to be wearing an article of
extravagant African clothing.

SEMMI

I am beginning to suspect that
these are the people who have
taken our luggage.

A STREET HUSTLER approaches them.

HUSTLER

Want to buy some toothbrushes?

He opens his coat, displaying a collection of ivory
toothbrushes.

HUSTLER (CONT'D)

This is real fly personal hygiene
equipment. Got a helluva hair
dryer here, too. Check it out.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

61

He pulls out a hair dryer studded with the royal crest on it.

SEMMI
(angrily)
Thief!

AKEEM
Semmi, please.
(to the Hustler)
Excuse us, sir.

The Hustler leaves.

SEMMI
Those things belong to us.

AKEEM
We are well rid of these material
things. Let others wear our
princely robes. We are in New
York. We must dress as New
Yorkers.

62 EXT. DISCOUNT CLOTHING STORE - DAY

62

PEOPLE gawk at Akeem and Semmi as they stroll grandly out of the store dressed like the ultimate tourists. Akeem wears a N.Y. Met's shirts, a Yankee jacket and a big button that says "I Love NY". Semmi has on an Ed Koch "How am I doin?" t-shirt and a jacket plastered with big red apples.

SEMMI
I feel they are staring at us.

They stop and look at their reflections in an appliance store window where several TV sets are all playing the same ad for Afro-Glo Hair Products.

AKEEM
(pointing to his hair)
Perhaps it is my prince's lock.

63 INT. "MY-T SHARP" BARBER SHOP - DAY

63

A group of old regular CUSTOMERS have gathered to read newspapers, place bets and antagonize each other. Clarence (Eddie) and Sweets are still arguing. As usual, Morris (Arsinio) is eating and The Old Jewish Man (Eddie) is reading.

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED:

63

CLARENCE
You must be outta your damn mind!
Joe Louis is the baddest fighter
that ever lived ...

Akeem and Semmi enter.

CLARENCE (CONT'D)
Be with you boys in a minute.
(back to Sweets)
He's badder than Cassius Clay.
He's badder than Sugar Ray. He's
badder than Mike Tyson. He's
badder than all of them. He whip
all their asses.

OLD JEWISH CUSTOMER
What about Rocky Marciano?

CLARENCE
There we go. Every time we talk
about boxing some white man bring
up Rocky Marciano. Rocky Marciano
ain't shit.

OLD JEWISH CUSTOMER
He beat Joe Louis' ass.

CLARENCE
Joe Louis was 75 years old! He
come out of retirement to get into
the ring with Rocky Marciano.
He was 75, 76 years old.

OLD JEWISH CUSTOMER
You're crazy.

CLARENCE
Joe always lied about his age.
Frank Sinatra come inside this
shop, sat right here in this
chair, and I said, "Frank, you
take care of Joe. How old is he?"
Frank said "Between me and you,
Joe is 137."

SWEETS
Oh, man, you don't know no Frank
Sinatra.

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED: (2)

63

CLARENCE

Oh, muthafucka come on then ...
(brushing off the chair)
Who's next?

Akeem gets into the chair.

CLARENCE (CONT'D)

(examining the Prince's
lock)

Goddamn boy, is that a weave or
something? What you got there?

AKEEM

It is my natural hair. I have
been growing it since birth.

CLARENCE

What you put in there? What kind
of chemicals?

AKEEM

Nothing but juices and berries.

CLARENCE

Aw shit, that ain't nothin but
Ultra Perm. How you want it cut?

AKEEM

Just make it nice and neat.

With one whack of the scissors, Clarence lops off the lock.

CLARENCE

That'll be \$8.

Akeem pays him. He studies himself in the mirror.

AKEEM

Semmi, tell me the truth. How
do I look?

SEMMI

(approvingly)
I think it's time to find your
queen.

CUT TO:

DATING MONTAGE:

Akeem and Semmi out with several women on different nights in
different bars.

64 INT. STUCK-UP GIRL BAR - NIGHT

64

A STUCK-UP GIRL
(to Akeem)
I'm looking for a man with a BMW.

65 INT. PRETENTIOUS GIRL BAR - NIGHT

65

A PRETENTIOUS GIRL
(to Semmi)
Right now I'm a receptionist, but
I also design things ... like
clothes ... cars ... airports.

66 INT. BIG STANK WOMAN BAR - NIGHT

66

A BIG STANK WOMAN
(complaining loudly to
Akeem)
That's the problem. I can't find
a man that can satisfy me. Some
guys'll go an hour,
hour-and-a-half, and that's it!
A man gotta put in overtime for
me to get off!

67 INT. MUSCULAR GIRLS BAR - NIGHT

67

Two aggressive MUSCULAR GIRLS sitting at a table with Akeem and Semmi. Big gold medallions around their necks spell out their names, "FRESH PEACHES" and "SUGAR CUBE".

FRESH PEACHES
(smiling to show her
gold teeth)
You know, a lot of men are put
off by women that are into rap.

68 INT. KINKY GIRL BAR - NIGHT

68

A KINKY GIRL
(to Akeem and Semmi)
I'm into the group thing.

69 INT. TOUGH GIRL BAR - NIGHT

69

A TOUGH GIRL
Well, I'm almost single. My
husband's on Death Row.

70 INT. DITZY WOMAN BAR - NIGHT

70

A DITZY WOMAN with a hand puppet, cornering Akeem.

DITZY WOMAN
(in a high-pitched
"puppet voice")
Oooo. I'd like to get in on with
you, big guy.
(scolding the puppet)
Penelope, are you bothering this
nice man?

She smiles sweetly at Akeem who grins feebly.

71 INT. MUSCULAR GIRLS BAR - NIGHT

71

Fresh Peaches and Sugar Cube going into their rap, twitching
their arms, contorting their faces. Akeem and Semmi look
trapped.

FRESH PEACHES & SUGAR CUBE:
(rapping)
Whoo, uh unh, hoo. Unh unh hoo,
uh unh hoo!

72 INT. INTENSE WOMAN BAR - NIGHT

72

AN INTENSE WOMAN
I was Joan of Arc in a former
life.
(holding a flaming
lighter under her palm)
See.

73 INT. IDENTICAL TWINS BAR - NIGHT

73

A pair of IDENTICAL TWINS wearing the same outfits. The twins
seem to be leaning towards one another.

IDENTICAL TWIN
(to Akeem and Semmi)
This is the first date Theresa
and I have gone on since the
doctors separated us.

74 INT. SEXY WOMAN BAR - NIGHT

74

A SEXY WOMAN
(to Akeem)
I've got a little secret.
(whispering in his ear)
I worship the devil.

75 INT. MUSCULAR GIRLS BAR - NIGHT

75

Fresh Peaches up on the table, swinging her arms and hips while Sugar Cube does a huffing, puffing rhythm.

FRESH PEACHES

(rapping)

My name is Peaches.
And I'm the best!
All the D.J.'s ...
Want to feel my breasts!

SUGAR CUBE

Hoo, hah hah, hoo!
Hoo, hah hah, hoo!

Sugar Cube starts spinning on her head on top of the table.
Akeem and Semmi sink into their chairs.

76 EXT. TENEMENT STREET - NIGHT

76

Akeem and Semmi walk back toward their apartment, dejected.

AKEEM

Is it my imagination or does every
woman in New York have a severe
emotional problem?

SEMMI

I don't think we will ever find
your queen.

They pass by the barber shop where Clarence (Eddie) is locking up for the night.

CLARENCE

Hey, what's up?

AKEEM —

Where can one go to find a nice
woman?

CLARENCE

They ain't gonna fall in your lap.
You got to go out and look.

SEMMI

We've been to every bar in Queens.

CLARENCE

Well, that's where you screwed
up. If you wanna find something
nice you gotta go to a church ...
(more)

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED:

76

CLARENCE (Cont'd)
or the library. Or this thing
I'm going to tonight ...
(pointing to a poster
in the shop window)
The Black Awareness Rally. That's
where the real fine women are
gonna be.

77 INT. YMCA - JACKSON HEIGHTS - NIGHT

77

A big banner stretched across the stage reads "BLACK AWARENESS WEEK ... sponsored by Afro-Glo." A well-dressed CROWD representing a cross section of the community has gathered for the celebration.

On the stage a PREACHER (ARSENIO) is surrounded by seven ATTRACTIVE GIRLS in swim suits.

PREACHER
You know I'm not here to preach
today.
(working himself up)
But when I LOOK at these lovely
ladies who are contending in the
Miss Black Awareness Competition,
I do not feel guilty. I do not
feel ashamed. Because I KNOW this
is PROOF that the LORD sits on
high. He sits on his throne and
looks down like a Hugh Hefner UP
ABOVE and THIS is his magazine
to US. LORD, OH LORD. THANK YOU
JESUS.

(calming down)
And now a very special treat.
You all know him from his
appearance as Joe the Policeman
on the "What's Going Down" episode
of That's My Momma. Please put
your hands together for Jackson
Height's own ... Mister Randy
Watson.

RANDY WATSON (Eddie) enters. A bad entertainer in his late 30's, bearded, with a paunch protruding from his robin's egg blue tuxedo. Randy looks like he never had a career and never will.

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED:

77

RANDY (EDDIE)
Thank you, Bobby.
(shifting into a low
serious voice)
When I told my little six-year-old
girl that I was appearing at Black
Awareness Week, she said, "Why?
Black people know they're black."
I said, "Honey, it's not enough
to be black, we must also be ...
aware."

The BAND starts to play. Randy goes into a wretched, off-key,
over-dramatic version of "The Greatest Love of All".

RANDY
(singing)
I believe the children are our future.
Teach them well and let them be ...

78 ANGLE ON AKEEM AND SEMMI

78

They are in the crowd studying the beauty contestants.

SEMMI
Apparently these are the best
women Queens has to offer. Pick
one and let's go home.

AKEEM
(teasing)
I take it you do not love New
York?

SEMMI
(sarcastically)
You are mistaken. Who does not
enjoy stepping in dog excrement?

AKEEM
Have patience.

79 ON STAGE

79

Randy Watson is finishing the song, down on his knees, racked
with false emotion, his tux shirt open.

(CONTINUED)

79 CONTINUED:

79

RANDY (EDDIE)
(pounding the floor of
the stage)
No matter what they take from me.
They can't take away ...
(rising to his knees)
My dig-ni-ty!
Because the greatest love of all
is happening tooooo ... meeeee!

The Crowd APPLAUDS politely. Randy bows deeply, as though it is a standing ovation.

PREACHER
Mister Randy Watson! Thank you.
Before we go any further, I'd like
to thank, Mr. Cleo McDowell who
has donated the fine food and
beverages we are consuming here
tonight.

80 ANGLE ON BURGER STAND

80

MR. McDOWELL, a self-made, middle-aged businessman. He waves to the crowd from behind the counter where he is handing out cold hamburgers and warm soft drinks.

PREACHER (CONT'D)
Cleo, I know you must be proud
of your lovely daughter.
(Mr. McDowell smiles)
We all are. Please welcome one
of the organizers of today's
festivities, Miss Lisa McDowell.

LISA McDOWELL starts toward the stage.

MR. McDOWELL
Try to work in a plug for the new
salad bar.

LISA
Daddy, I'm not mentioning the
restaurant.

MR. McDOWELL
At least give 'em the address.

81 BACK TO SEMMI AND AKEEM

81

SEMMI
Let's go.

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED:

81

AKEEM

No, wait.

82 ON STAGE

82

Lisa steps up to the microphone. She is a very pretty young woman. But it's more than her beauty that attracts us. Perhaps it's her self-confidence. Maybe it's her smile.

LISA

Thank you. You know, Black Awareness Week is an opportunity for self-expression. Just a moment ago, Randy attempted to express himself through song ...

(searching for something nice to say)

... in his own unique way. But the song makes a good point ... the children are our future. That's why it's up to all of us to provide a place where our children can express themselves.

83 BACK TO SEMMI AND AKEEM

83

The Crowd APPLAUDS. Akeem is mesmerized by her.

AKEEM

She's wonderful.

SEMMI

Akeem ...

AKEEM

Sssshhh!

84 BACK ON STAGE

84

LISA

We need to rebuild Lincoln Park. Ushers are passing through with donation boxes. Please give all you can.

(she smiles)

We're happy to get the kind of money that jingles ... but we'd rather get the kind that folds. Thank you.

She smiles. The Preacher comes over.

(CONTINUED)

84 CONTINUED:

84

PREACHER

Now, you heard the lady. So give
it up!

85 IN THE CROWD

85

People make small donations as the collection box is passed around.

PREACHER (CONT'D)

Isn't she wonderful? Makes me think the "L" in her name stands for love. The "I" for intelligence. The "S" for Sweet. And the "A" for ALWAYS aware. And remember, this Friday night, at the community center, a big dinner dance and the crowning of Miss Black Awareness.

Akeem is smitten, totally in love. Someone passes the box to him. Without taking his eyes off Lisa, he reaches into his pocket, pulls out a huge wad of money, and drops it into the box.

86 EXT. NEWSSTAND STREET - NIGHT

86

Akeem and Semmi head toward a newsstand.

SEMMI

If you are convinced she is the one,
why did you not speak to her?

AKEEM

Because I must be perfect when we meet.
The first impression is everything.

They pass by a newsstand where TWO YOUNG GIRLS are chatting. *

AKEEM (CONT'D)

American women are so demanding. We
need to know what they want ... what
they desire in a man.

One girl picks up a magazine with Michael Jackson on the cover.*

GIRL

Oh, look. I've gotta have this.

OTHER GIRL

Michael Jackson?

GIRL

Yeah, he's hot.

OTHER GIRL

I'll tell you who's hot. Prince.

87 INT. BLACK AWARENESS DINNER - NIGHT

87

The party is in full swing. The dance floor is filled with COUPLES having a great time. OTHERS sit at tables talking, laughing, drinking -- including Lisa McDowell who is chatting with some GIRLFRIENDS.

The MUSIC shifts into a THROBBING, PULSATING BEAT.

88 ANGLE ON DOORS

88

Suddenly, the big double doors swing open. Semmi enters, dressed as Michael Jackson, moon walking backwards into the room.

89 ANGLE ON CROWD

89

The couples stop dancing and stare at him, astonished.

90 ON SEMMI

90

Semmi does a Michael Jackson spin and strikes a pose, pointing towards the door.

The MUSIC becomes SENSUAL.

91 ANGLE ON DOORS

91

Akeem slides into the room on his knees in full Prince attire: open ruffled shirt, fishnet stockings, stacked heels, make-up, a curl of hair dangling in his eyes.

92 ON CROWD

92

Everyone in the room gazes at him in open-mouthed amazement.

93 ON AKEEM

93

Akeem gets up and shimmies across the floor, licking his fingers, rubbing his hands all over his body.

94 ON LISA

94

Lisa looks at him like he's crazy.

95 ON AKEEM

95

Akeem drops to the floor and slithers toward her on his belly, moving in time with the sensual music, humping the floor like a reptile in heat.

96 ANGLE ON LISA AND AKEEM

96

He wriggles up to her, lying at her feet, flicking his tongue.

(CONTINUED)

96 CONTINUED:

96

Lisa stares at him, astounded, repulsed.

Akeem speaks in a low, breathy Prince-like moan.

AKEEM

Let us become one, Lisa.

LISA

(calmly)

I don't think so.

He tries to lick her knee.

LISA (CONT'D)

(evenly)

Don't. Don't even think about it.

He wriggles half-heartedly.

LISA (CONT'D)

(coolly)

Go away.

All the bravado drains from Akeem's face. He slithers back out of the room as inconspicuously as possible.

97 EXT. ALLEY OUTSIDE AWARENESS DINNER - NIGHT

97

Akeem and Semmi, still in their ridiculous outfits, walk down a deserted alley, dejected.

SEMMI

(trying to cheer him up)

Maybe she was only being coy.

AKEEM

(slipping on his heel)

No. She was totally repulsed by me.

SEMMI

Perhaps you should give up.

AKEEM

No. I must see her again. But we cannot afford to make another mistake.

A98 EXT. McDOWELL'S FAST FOOD RESTAURANT - DAY A98*

ESTABLISHING SHOT of the restaurant. *

98 INT. McDOWELL'S FAST FOOD RESTAURANT - HALLWAY - DAY 98

Akeem and Semmi are dressed in plain, simple clothes, applying for a job. Lisa's father, Mr. McDowell, is interviewing them in a tiny, crowded employee area in the back of the restaurant. He looks at them skeptically.

MR. McDOWELL

Either of you ever have any fast food experience before?

SEMMI

(disdainfully)

Certainly not.

AKEEM

(with a warning glance
at Semmi)

This will be our first job in the United States.

MR. McDOWELL

Well ... I guess you gotta start somewhere.

(handing them each a
paper McDowell's hat)

Come on. I'll show you around. *

99 ANGLE ON LISA'S OFFICE 99

Mr. McDowell leads them on a tour. They pass by a small business office in the back. Lisa steps out, carrying a clipboard.

LISA

Excuse me. Dad, they're delivering the potatoes now. I need you to sign this check.

MR. McDOWELL

(signing it)

You got us a good price. Good goin'.

LISA

Thanks.

Lisa walks back to her office. Akeem can't keep his eyes off her.

100 EXT. McDOWELL'S RESTAURANT - DAY

100

Mr. McDowell, Akeem and Semmi stand outside McDowell's which looks suspiciously similar to a McDonald's.

MR. McDOWELL

Your first job every mornin' is to sweep this walkway. Then wash all the windows real good ... and don't leave no streaks.

Mr. McDowell notices A YOUNG MAN in a business suit taking a picture of the facade of the restaurant.

MR. McDOWELL (CONT'D)

(shouting at the Young Man)

Hey! What you doin'? Get the hell outta here before I bust that camera.

The Young Man retreats. Mr. McDowell fumes.

MR. McDOWELL (CONT'D)

(to Akeem and Semmi)

Look here. If anybody ever comes by here in a suit ... especially a lawyer or something ... I ain't here. Understand? See ... me and the McDonalds people have a simple misunderstandin'.

Mr. McDowell points to the red and yellow McDowell's sign which is topped by big golden arches.

MR. McDOWELL (CONT'D)

See ... they're Mack-Donald's.
Mine is Mick-Dowell's ... They got the golden arches ... I got the golden arcs.

They walk into the restaurant.

101 INT. McDOWELL'S RESTAURANT - DINING AREA - DAY

101

Several CUSTOMERS are eating burgers at little tables. It looks remarkably like McDonald's.

MR. McDOWELL

See they got the "Big Mac" ...
I got the "Big Mick."
(more)

(CONTINUED)

101 CONTINUED:

101

MR. McDOWELL (CONT'D)
 We both got two all-beef patties,
 special sauce, lettuce, cheese,
 pickles, and onions. But they use
 a sesame-seed bun. My buns have
 no seeds.

*

*

102 ANGLE ON KITCHEN AREA

102

Several EMPLOYEES are hard at work, grilling burgers, making fries. The place is bustling. The workers speed up even more when Mr. McDowell enters.

MR. McDOWELL
 You got to mop the food-prep area
 twice a day. Know how to mop?

AKEEM
 Of course.

Mr. McDowell rolls out a mop bucket, a commercial model with a roller attachment. Akeem tries to pick up the mop. It's stuck in the roller. Akeem has no idea how to operate it. Mr. McDowell sighs and releases the mop, shaking his head, wondering if he's made the right decision in hiring these Africans.

MR. McDOWELL
 (like he's talking to
 a child)
 Don't try to use the bucket.
 It'll just confuse you. When you
 through here, take out the trash.
 (to Semmi)
 I got an easy job for you.

103 INT. KITCHEN AREA - DAY (LATER SAME DAY)

103

Semmi is cleaning the grease trap of the grill, scraping vile muck into a bucket with great distaste. Working alongside him is MAURICE, an overly-eager young man.

MAURICE
 McDowell's offer a lotta
 possibilities. I started out
 doing clean-up just like you,
 but now ... see ... I'm washin'
 lettuce. Pretty soon I'm on
 fries ... and then on the grill.
 In a year or two, I ...
 (more)

*

*

(CONTINUED)

103 CONTINUED:

103

MAURICE (CONT'D)
make assistant manager.

Akeem passes by mopping in a stiff, formal manner ... like a prince.

MAURICE (CONT'D)
You mop funny. Where you from?

AKEEM
Africa.

MAURICE
I guess they don't mop very much down there, huh? You too stiff, man. You got to loosen up. Look here, let me show you.

Maurice demonstrates, making exaggerated fluid movements. Akeem tries to copy this. Akeem walks away, mopping, trying to move his body like Maurice ... kind of rolling his shoulders and sliding his feet along. Real loose.

104 INT. McDOWELL'S RESTAURANT - HALLWAY - DAY

104

Lisa is inside, working at her desk. Akeem passes by still mopping.

AKEEM
Hi.

LISA
(looking up from her work)
Hello.

AKEEM
I am Akeem.

LISA
Nice to meet you, Akeem.

She goes back to working on some papers.

AKEEM
I have recently been placed in charge of garbage. Do you have any that requires disposal?

(CONTINUED)

104 CONTINUED:

104

LISA
No.
(pointing to waste paper
basket)
Totally empty.

AKEEM
I see ... well ... if you ever
do, just call me and I will take
care of it immediately.

LISA
That's good to know.

AKEEM
(getting carried away)
When you think of trash, think
of Akeem.
(instantly embarrassed
by what he's said)
Well ... I just go now and finish
the rest of my sanitation duties.
(trying to recover)
Perhaps we shall have more
opportunities to speak on a
professional level. Goodbye, Lisa.

LISA
Goodbye, Akeem.

Akeem mops away. Lisa grins, shaking her head. This guy is
really strange.

A105 EXT. McDOWELL'S RESTAURANT - DAY

A105*

A handsome well-dressed young man drives up in a Red TRANS AM.
He is DARRYL JENKS, Lisa's boyfriend, the very well-to-do heir
to his family business -- Soul Glo Products. His hair is
dripping wet with Gerry Curl Activator.

105 INT. McDOWELL'S RESTAURANT - DINING AREA - DAY

105*

Darryl breezes in. Mr. McDowell greets him like a son.

MR. McDOWELL
Hey, Darryl! Lookin' sharp. Here
... have a Mick-Shake ... I believe
strawberry's your favorite.
(handing it to him)
Lisa's in the back waitin' for you.

They walk out.

106 INT. McDOWELL'S RESTAURANT - HALLWAY - DAY

106

Akeem is mopping nearby.

MR. McDOWELL
How's everything over at Soul Glo? *

DARRYL
Fine. Our new home-weave products
are really taking off. By the
way, Dad isn't using the company
tickets for the Jets game.

(taking tickets
out of his
pocket)
I thought you might enjoy them.

MR. McDOWELL
(taking them)
Thank you very much, Darryl.
That's very considerate of you.
(poking his head into
Lisa's door)
Lisa, look who's here.

Lisa looks up from her desk, happy to see Darryl.

LISA
Hi.

MR. McDOWELL
You two kids have a good time.

Mr. McDowell leaves. Akeem mops just outside the door, trying to overhear their conversation.

DARRYL
Ready?

LISA
Sure.

Darryl looks at her admiringly, sipping on his milk shake. She puts away some papers and crosses to him.

LISA (CONT'D)
I want to know something. The
other day at the rally somebody
stuffed a large amount of cash
into one of the collection boxes.
You wouldn't happen to know who
it was, would you?

(CONTINUED)

106 CONTINUED:

106

DARRYL
(coyly)
Well ...

LISA
(smiling)
I thought it was you.

DARRYL
(false modesty)
Anything for the kids.

Lisa kisses Darryl on the cheek. They walk out the back door.
Akeem picks up a bag of garbage and follows them outside.

107 EXT. McDOWELL'S RESTAURANT - ALLEY - DAY

107

Darryl and Lisa get into his white Trans-Am.

DARRYL
Oh, before I forget. I got us
four tickets for the game.
Maybe your sister'll want to bring
somebody.

LISA
Great.

DARRYL
(to Akeem)
Take care of this, will you?

Darryl casually tosses his milkshake cup. Akeem tries to catch
it, but the top pops off and milkshake splatters all over his
shirt.

Lisa and Darryl DRIVE AWAY.

108 INT. "MY-T SHARP" BARBER SHOP - NIGHT

108

An Elderly Customer pays Clarence (Eddie) for his haircut.
Morris (Arsinio), the other barber, sits in his chair sopping up
his dinner. The Old Jewish Man (Eddie) sits reading.

MORRIS
(stuffing a pork chop
in his mouth)
Who's next?

(CONTINUED)

108 CONTINUED:

108

CLARENCE
(mocking him)
Motherfucker, you been sayin'
"Who's next?" all day. All you
do is sit there and eat. That's
the third goddamn plate you've
had today, and you ain't cut one
head. They're ain't even no hair
under your chair!

Akeem enters.

AKEEM
Excuse me ...

OLD JEWISH MAN
Look, it's Kunta Kinte.

CLARENCE
What's up?

AKEEM
Is it possible to make my hair
look like that?

Akeem points to a photograph on the wall: A stylish young black man with a wet, greasy gerry curls.

CLARENCE
Aw, man. Why you want a big ol'
floppy mess of hair on your head?
Have some pride. Wear it natural.
You never saw Martin Luther King
walkin' around with no greasy
gerry curl.
(to Sweets, a customer
in another chair)
You know, I met Dr. King once.

SWEETS
You ain't never met no Martin
Luther King.

CLARENCE
Did too. Nineteen Sixty-Three.
Tennessee. I was walkin' around
a corner and this guy came up to
me and BAM ... punches me right
in the chest. I said, "Hey, Dr.
King!" He says, "Oops, I thought
you was somebody else."

(CONTINUED)

108 CONTINUED: (2)

108

SWEETS

You lie ...

CLARENCE

Knocked the wind out of me. Tried
to lay me out. Yes he did.

(to Akeem)

Why you so worried about how you
look anyway?

AKEEM

I am trying to gain the interest
of a certain young lady.

CLARENCE

Well, I'm a barber ... so you
didn't hear me say this ... but
I ain't never seen a lady sleep
with a guy because his hair look
good. This an American girl?

AKEEM

Yes.

CLARENCE

Let me tell you something about
women in this country. The way
to their heart is through their
daddy. Once the old man likes
you ... you're home free.

109 EXT. McDOWELL'S RESTAURANT - ALLEY - DAY

109

It's morning as Mr. McDowell goes to work. He opens the back
door and enters.

110 INT. McDOWELL'S RESTAURANT - DINING AREA - DAY - (REDRESS)

110*

It's spotless. Immaculately clean. The walls and floors are
gleaming. All the clutter has been put away. There is even
a potted plant in the corner.

MR. McDOWELL

(suspiciously)

What are you doing here so early? *

(CONTINUED)

110 CONTINUED:

110

AKEEM

(still mopping the
floor)I am cleaning, Mr. McDowell. I
believe a clean environment makes
the workers more productive.

*

MR. McDOWELL

(trying to figure him
out)

You ain't from the union, are you?

AKEEM

No, sir.

MR. McDOWELL

Because if you are, you can get
out right now.

Mr. McDowell walks into his office.

111 INT. McDOWELL'S RESTAURANT - McDOWELL'S OFFICE - DAY

111

After a few moments, Akeem shows up at the door with his mop.

AKEEM

Mr. McDowell ...

MR. McDOWELL

What is it?

AKEEM

I was wondering if you happened
to see the professional football
contest yesterday.

*

MR. McDOWELL

No, I didn't.

AKEEM

(proudly)

It was most exhilarating. The
Giants of New York challenged
the Packers of Green Bay. In the
end, the Giants triumphed by
kicking an oblong ball made of
pigskin through a large "H".
It was a ripping victory!

*

(CONTINUED)

111 CONTINUED:

111

MR. McDOWELL

(calmly)

Son, I'm only going to tell you this once. If you want to work here, stay off the drugs.

The smile slowly drains from Akeem's face. He turns and mops across the floor, and out of the room.

112 INT. McDOWELL'S RESTAURANT - DINING AREA - DAY

112

Maurice is putting straws into a dispenser a few at a time. Akeem mops in.

MAURICE

Akeem, come here for a second. I got to talk to you. You're startin' to annoy some people here.

AKEEM

Why? What have I done?

MAURICE

You're workin too hard. It makes the rest of us look bad.

AKEEM

I am only trying to perform my job to the best of my ability.

MAURICE

No, no, no. That's very unAmerican. Right now, you doing the work of three men. The way I see it, that's puttin two guys out of work. You don't want to do that, do you?

AKEEM

No.

MAURICE

Then chill out. Take it easy. Don't be afraid to fuck off. That's what made this country great.

113 P.O.V. - THROUGH THE FRONT WINDOW

113

Darryl is dropping Lisa off at work in his Trans Am.

(CONTINUED)

113 CONTINUED:

113

MAURICE (CONT'D)

(pointing to Darryl)
 You think the Prince of Soul Glo
 works hard? No way. He just
 living off his father's invention.
 He got it made. That's why I
 never even bother asking Lisa out.
 That man can buy her anything he
 wants. How you gonna compete with
 that?

*

Akeem thinks about what Maurice has said.

114 EXT. THE McDOWELL HOUSE - NIGHT

114

MUSIC: SOMETHING LIKE JANET JACKSON'S "NASTY"

A delivery van pulls up in the circular driveway of the modest colonial house in an upper-middle class neighborhood of Queens. A DELIVERY MAN gets out, accompanied by a security guard.

115 INT. MCDOWELL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

115

We see the source of the MUSIC. Lisa is in the den trying to read a magazine while her younger sister PATRICE is practicing sexy dance moves, admiring herself in the mirror. There is something wild and lascivious about Patrice.

The DOORBELL RINGS.

PATRICE (CONT'D)

I'll get it.

Patrice answers the front door. The Delivery Man and Security Guard are waiting.

DELIVERY MAN

Delivery for Miss Lisa McDowell.

PATRICE

I'll take it. I'm her sister.

Patrice signs the clipboard. He hands her a small gift-wrapped package.

PATRICE (CONT'D)

Thank you.

Patrice starts to rip open the package. Lisa enters.

(CONTINUED)

115 CONTINUED:

115

LISA
What is it?

PATRICE
Something for you.

LISA
Do you mind if I open it?

She tosses it to Lisa who opens the package.

116 INSERT - THE GIFT

116

An exquisite pair of ruby earrings.

117 BACK TO SCENE

117

PATRICE
Whoa! You think they're real?

LISA
They couldn't be.

Lisa opens the car. She is puzzled but pleased.

118 INSERT - THE CARD

118

It reads: "FROM AN ADMIRER. (NOT DARRYL)"

119 BACK TO SCENE

119

PATRICE
(reading it)
"From an admirer ... not Darryl."
(teasing)
Somebody's messin' around.

LISA
I am not.

PATRICE
I don't care how much a man
admires you, he's not gonna send
you earrings like that unless
you're giving him a little booty.

LISA
Patrice, not everyone thinks like
you.

PATRICE
Yes they do. They just don't
admit it.

120 INT. McDOWELL'S RESTAURANT - DINING AREA - DAY

120

Akeem and Semmi are cleaning the front windows. Maurice is working behind the counter.

SEMMI

Do you realize I have not had sex since we got to America?

Akeem looks towards the window.

121 HIS P.O.V. THRU THE WINDOW

121

Lisa and Patrice are walking towards the restaurant.

122 BACK TO SCENE

122

AKEEM

Shhhh. There she is. I'm going to talk to her.

SEMMI

Good! Tell her you sent her a half-million-dollar pair of earrings. Then she will fall into your arms and we can leave this god-forsaken place.

AKEEM

I cannot do that.

SEMMI

Well, do something!

AKEEM

Do not worry. I have a plan.

SEMMI

What are you going to do? Mop your way into her heart?

AKEEM

That is not fair.

SEMMI

I'll tell you what is not fair ... me doing manual labor!

(showing him his nails)

Look at this. I am badly in need of a manicure.

Lisa and Patrice enter.

(CONTINUED)

122 CONTINUED:

122

AKEEM
(feigning surprise)
Lisa!

LISA
Oh, hi, Akeem. This is my sister
Patrice.

Patrice stares at Akeem. She likes what she sees.

PATRICE
Hi.

LISA
Akeem's from Africa.

PATRICE
What you doing in New York?

AKEEM
I'm a student.

LISA
Really? What school are you going
to?

AKEEM
(realizing he's trapped)
The uh ... university.

LISA
Which one?

AKEEM
The University of United States.

PATRICE
I never heard of that ...

AKEEM
It is ... very small ... we don't
even have a basketball team.

PATRICE
Really? We got an extra ticket for
the St. Johns game tomorrow. Want
to come?

*

*

(CONTINUED)

122 CONTINUED: (2)

122

 AKEEM
 (slyly)
Well ...

 LISA
Come on. You can double date with
me and Darryl.

123 INT. DARRYL'S TRANS AM - MOVING - N.D. STREET - DAY

123

Akeem is scrunched in the cramped back seat with Patrice who has her arm around Akeem.

 DARRYL
Bet when you were sittin' back
there in the jungle, you never
thought you'd get to ride in a
car like this.

 AKEEM
You're right about that.

 DARRYL
Beats the hell out of riding an
elephant. Hah, hah.

124 INT. MADISON SQUARE GARDEN - COURT - DAY (STOCK)

124*

A St. John's player blocks a shot.

*

125 EXT. STANDS - DAY

125

The CROWD is going wild, but no one more than Darryl who's on his feet SCREAMING HOARSELY.

 DARRYL
Yes! Yes! In his face! That's
my man!!

*

He sits back down with Lisa, Akeem and Patrice.

 PATRICE
Why don't you take off your jacket,
Akeem?

*

Akeem takes it off. Patrice places it over their laps.

*

 PATRICE (CONT'D)
Isn't that better?

*

(CONTINUED)

125 CONTINUED:

DARRYL
(to Akeem)
Wearing clothes must be a new
experience for you.

Lisa shoots Darryl a look.

LISA
Are you able to follow the game,
Akeem?

AKEEM
Oh, yes.

DARRYL
What kind of games you play in
Africa ... Chase the monkey,
hah, hah.

Hidden under the jacket, Patrice is inching her hand up
Akeem's leg. He tries to ignore it.

AKEEM
No. We play football. I
believe you call it soccer.

DARRYL
Oh yeah. That's a cute game ...
especially the way you bounce the
ball off your head. Personally,
I don't like any sport where you
can't use your hands.

Under the jacket, Patrice goes for the gold. Akeem leaps
up, pretending to cheer the action on the field.

AKEEM
(shouting excitedly)
Yes! Yes!

126 P.O.V. THE COURT

126

Nothing is happening.

127 BACK IN STANDS

127

DARRYL
It's just a time out.

AKEEM
I know. It's my favorite part.
Would you excuse me for a moment?

Akeem walks down the aisle and up the steps.

128 INT. MADISON SQUARE GARDEN - MEN'S ROOM AREA - DAY

128*

Akeem is waiting in a long line. A VENDOR passes by carrying a tray of sodas. Suddenly the man stops dead in his tracks.

VENDOR

Oh, my goodness! Oh, my goodness!

(pointing at Akeem)

It's you! I can't believe it!

(bending down on his
knees, still holding
his tray)

Greetings, Your Highness!

Akeem tries to calm the man down. Other people are noticing.

AKEEM

(embarrassed)

Please ... stop bowing.

VENDOR

I am a loyal citizen of Zamunda.

AKEEM

Come on ... get up ... you're
spilling your beverages.

VENDOR

This is the greatest day of my
life!

Everyone in the line looks at Akeem.

AKEEM

It was nice meeting you, too.
Excuse me.

Akeem hurries away.

129 INT. TUNNEL - DAY

129*

Akeem passes by Lisa and Darryl. The Vendor is still following him, now accompanied by a FRIEND who carries a small flash camera.

VENDOR

(to Akeem)

Please ... may I just have my
picture taken with you?

Lisa and Darryl watch, bewildered, as the Vendor puts his arm around Akeem. The friend SNAPS a picture.

*

(CONTINUED)

129 CONTINUED:

129

VENDOR (CONT'D)
I will treasure this experience
the rest of my life!

The Vendor leaves.

LISA
Who was that?

AKEEM
Just some man I met in the
restroom.

130 INT. McDOWELL'S RESTAURANT - DINING AREA - DAY

130

Some CUSTOMERS are eating as Akeem passes by with his mop.
Semmi is working nearby.

AKEEM
(smiling cheerfully)
Ah, I see you've selected the
Mick-Nuggets. An excellent
choice.

The customers look at Akeem like he's from outer space. Lisa
sits at a table eating lunch with Darryl.

DARRYL
Why don't you quit this job?

LISA
I like it here.

DARRYL
But you're my lady. And my lady
doesn't have to work. Let me take
care of you. I'll give you
anything you want.
(getting up)
What can I get you?

LISA
Nothing.

DARRYL
I'll get you some coffee. Be
right back.

Darryl goes to the counter. Akeem mops over towards Lisa.

(CONTINUED)

130 CONTINUED:

130

LISA

Hey, Akeem. Did you have a good time at the game?

AKEEM

Yes, I did. Thank you.

LISA

I hope Darryl didn't offend you. Sometimes he can be pretty obnoxious.

AKEEM

Well, I'm sure he can't help it.

LISA

Why do men think they have to be so aggressive?

AKEEM

Aggression is the means by which a weak man cloaks his insecurity.

LISA

Who said that?

AKEEM

I did.

LISA

Sit down. Take a break for a minute.

Akeem sits. Lisa is growing increasingly interested in Akeem.

LISA (CONT'D)

You know, you're a very unusual guy. I've never seen anybody take so much pride in mopping a floor.

AKEEM

"He who would learn to fly one day must first learn to stand and walk. One cannot fly into flying."

(smiling)

That is not mine. That is Nietzsche.

LISA

See, that's what I mean. Most of the guys who work here don't go around quoting Nietzsche.

(CONTINUED)

130 CONTINUED: (2)

130

Suddenly their conversation is disrupted as a HOLD-UP MAN bursts into the restaurant, brandishing a sawed-off shotgun. He fires * once into the ceiling and points the weapon at the frightened COUNTER WORKERS.

HOLD-UP MAN
All right, everybody shut up and do what I say! Take the money out. All of it.

The counter workers quickly empty their registers. Darryl ducks behind the counter.

HOLD-UP MAN (CONT'D)
Put it in a sack ... now!

Maurice rakes the money into a canvas bag. *

HOLD-UP MAN (CONT'D)
(nervously)
Come on, come on, come on!

Keeping a close eye on the gunman, Akeem carefully unscrews the heavy handle of his mop.

HOLD-UP MAN (CONT'D)
(turning his gun on the customers)
Anybody move and I'll blow your fuckin' head off!

Akeem calmly rises to his feet. He approaches the hold-up man, holding the mop handle like a truncheon.

AKEEM
(calmly)
I think it would be wise to put down that weapon.

The gunman turns around, staring at Akeem astonished.

HOLD-UP MAN
What?!

AKEEM
Please refrain from any further obscenity in the presence of this young lady.

HOLD-UP MAN
Who the fuck is this asshole?

(CONTINUED)

130 CONTINUED: (3)

130

AKEEM

I warned you. Please desist.
Or I shall be forced to thrash
you.

HOLD-UP MAN

Fuck you!

As quick as lightning, Akeem flails out with the mop handle, deflecting the shotgun. With another thrust, he breaks the weapon from the gunman's grasp. It goes flying.

Akeem spins and slams the mop handle into the gunman's stomach, doubling him over. He brings the stick down again, knocking the assailant to the floor.

The hold-up man reaches for a switchblade in his belt. He freezes as he sees ...

Semmi calmly aiming the shotgun at him.

SEMMI

Freeze ... you runny discharge
from a diseased rhinoceros's
pizzle.

Darryl steps out from hiding to see what has happened. Lisa looks at Akeem, amazed. Mr. McDowell comes out of the back to see what all the commotion is about.

MR. McDOWELL

(shaking his head in
wonder)

Damn!

131 EXT. McDOWELL'S RESTAURANT - ALLEY - THAT NIGHT

131

Akeem is dumping garbage while Semmi tromps it into an overstuffed bin. Mr. McDowell joins them.

MR. McDOWELL,

I'm proud of what you boys did
out there today. That's the fifth
time we've been hit by that joker.
But I don't think he'll be comin'
back ... thanks to my African
Connection.

For the first time, Mr. McDowell smiles. Akeem heart soars, he has won him over.

(CONTINUED)

131 CONTINUED:

131

MR. McDOWELL (CONT'D)
 Listen ... keep Sunday night
 open. There's gonna be a little
 get-together at my house.

*

Mr. McDowell leaves.

AKEEM
 (to Semmi)
 You see. It is working. He has
 accepted us as equals.

132 EXT. McDOWELL HOUSE - NIGHT

132

Akeem and Semmi stand in front of the house wearing red bus boy jackets. Mr. McDowell is explaining things to Semmi.

MR. McDOWELL
 Just give 'em a ticket ... take
 their keys ... park the cars down
 the street. Then come inside and
 help in the kitchen.
 (to Akeem)
 You come on with me. I want to
 show you McDowell's little castle.

Semmi shoots Akeem a dark look. Akeem pretends not to notice, as he and Mr. McDowell walk inside.

133 INT. McDOWELL'S HOUSE - FOYER AND LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

133

The foyer, like the rest of the house, is over-decorated. Mr. McDowell places his finger on a dimmer switch. The lights dim.

MR. McDOWELL
 See ... this works off the body
 heat in my finger. Amazing, isn't
 it?

AKEEM
 (pretending to be
 impressed)
 Remarkable.

Akeem follows Mr. McDowell into the ostentatious living room.

MR. McDOWELL
 This is my showcase here. I think
 this speaks for itself.

They walk into the den.

134 INT. McDOWELL'S HOUSE - DEN - NIGHT

134

A typical wood paneled room.

MR. McDOWELL

You know, when I was growin' up,
nine of us lived in a shack no
bigger than this room. And look
what I have today. I only wish
Mrs. McDowell could have lived
to see it.

AKEEM

You have a fine house, sir.

MR. McDOWELL

Well, keep up the hard work and
who knows? In twenty or thirty
years maybe you could have a place
like this yourself.

(crossing to the wet
bar)

Now this is where you're gonna
be workin' today.

(taking a bottle of
Korbel out of the
refrigerator)

Know how to open a champagne
bottle?

AKEEM

I have seen it done.

MR. McDOWELL

Good. Just keep all the glasses
full.

(looking at his watch)
I better get dressed for the
party. Look around. Make
yourself at home till the guests
arrive.

Mr. McDowell leaves. Akeem gets up, looks around the room, and walks out.

135 INT. McDOWELL'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

135

As Akeem walks down the hall, he passes by Lisa's bedroom.

136 INT. McDOWELL'S HOUSE - LISA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

136

Akeem steps inside, curious. It is a very feminine room. Lisa's bed is topped by a frilly canopy that matches the bedspread. Akeem is drawn to some photographs on the dresser. He studies them --

137 CLOSE ON THE PHOTOGRAPHS

137

They are typical family portraits and snapshots: Lisa as a child, playing with her parents. Lisa as a teenager.

There is a big blow-up of Lisa on her sixteenth birthday. She is smiling, a big fancy cake in front of her, surrounded by friends. A younger Mr. McDowell has his arm around Lisa. On the wall behind them is a big hand-made sign spelling out in glitter: "Happy Birthday, Princess."

138 BACK TO SCENE

138

Akeem is startled by a voice from behind him. Patrice is standing there wearing a low cut dress.

PATRICE

What are you doing in here?

AKEEM

Nothing.

PATRICE

You're looking for something in my sister's room, aren't you?

AKEEM

Oh, no. You are mistaken.

Patrice advances toward Akeem.

PATRICE

(seductively)

I don't think so. I heard what you did to that guy with the gun. I think you're bad. And you know what? Bad boys make me hot.

Patrice throws her arms around Akeem. He tries to resist. They hear the family dog BARKING. Someone is coming.

139 INT. McDOWELL'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

139

It's Lisa and Darryl. The McDowell's Poodle is BARKING and GROWLING at Darryl.

(CONTINUED)

139 CONTINUED:

139

DARRYL

Get away, Nikki. That damn dog
never liked me.

(following her toward
her bedroom)

Come on, baby, we've got to talk
about this.

LISA

Not now, Darryl.

140 BACK IN THE BEDROOM

140

Akeem panics. He drags Patrice into Lisa's closet, closing the sliding mirrored door behind them just as Lisa and Darryl enter.

LISA

I've got to get dressed.

DARRYL

(slipping his arms
around her)

Go ahead. I like to watch you
dress.

(kissing her neck)

Let's settle this thing.

Lisa pulls away, goes to the closet and opens the sliding door.

141 INSIDE THE CLOSET

141

Luckily, Akeem and Patrice have moved to the other side of the closet.

142 BEDROOM

142

Lisa takes out a dress and closes the closet.

143 INSIDE THE CLOSET

143

Patrice is still amorous, kissing Akeem's neck, running her tongue into his ear. Akeem tries to fight her off.

144 BEDROOM

144

Lisa looks at the dress and holds it up, trying to decide.

LISA

I've already told you, I'm still
thinking about it.

Lisa pulls the dress back and opens the door on the other side.

145 INSIDE THE CLOSET

145

Patrice is smothering Akeem with wet sloppy kisses. Akeem drags her to the other side of the closet to keep them from being discovered. Lisa reaches for another dress on a hanger just inches from where Akeem is hiding, holding his hand over Patrice's mouth.

146 BEDROOM

146

DARRYL

You've been saying that for two years. I feel like you don't love me anymore.

LISA

That's not true.

Darryl puts his arms around Lisa.

DARRYL

Then say you'll marry me.

LISA

(exasperated)

Look. I'm not saying no. I just need some more time.

DARRYL

(satisfied)

That's all Darryl wanted to hear.

(kissing her)

Now you go put on your make-up and make yourself pretty for the people down there.

Darryl leaves. Lisa enters her bathroom to put on her make-up. Akeem slips out of the closet, sees the coast is clear, and sneaks out of the room. Patrice follows.

147 INT. McDOWELL'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT
(AN HOUR LATER)

147

The party is underway. The mostly upper-middle-class GUESTS are chatting with one another, sipping drinks, eating hors d'oeuvres.

The Preacher (Arsinio) has cornered some party guests.

PREACHER

On the way here, I felt the BREATH of the Lord on my shoulder. I did not smell WRIGLEYS.

(more)

(CONTINUED)

147 CONTINUED:

147

PREACHER (Cont'd)
I did not smell CLORETS. IT
wasn't BINACA. It was TRULY the
BREATH of the LORD. YES! Thank
you, Jesus!

148 ANGLE ON AKEEM

148

In another part of the room, Akeem is opening a fresh bottle of Korbel. Darryl approaches with an empty glass.

DARRYL

Hey, jungle man! Lay some more
champagne on me.

(Akeem pours him some)
I appreciate the way you handled
that guy with the gun. I would've
helped you but I had a cup of
coffee in my hand. Bet you
learned that stuff fighting lions
and tigers and shit like that.

AKEEM

Oh, yes. Where I come from we
have to be aggressive.

DARRYL

I'm for that. Especially with
women. They may not admit it,
but they all want a man who'll
take charge ... tell them what
to do.

Darryl drains his glass and walks over to Mr. McDowell who is
is trying his hardest to ingratiate himself with Darryl's
parents. MR. AND MRS. JENKS are sitting on a couch with
Darryl's GRANDMOTHER. Like Darryl, they are loyal users of Afro
Glo Products. MR. JENKS has a soggy mop of graying gerry curls.
MOM sports a massive glistening weave. Even GRANDMA JENKS has
big processed curls dripping down to her shoulders.

MR. McDOWELL

You know, Darryl, your mother gets
more lovely every time I see her.

DARRYL

Cleo, I'd like to talk to you
alone for a second.

MR. McDOWELL

Sure, Darryl.

(CONTINUED)

148 CONTINUED:

148

As they walk away, Semmi passes by carrying a tray of hors d'oeuvres. Mr. Jenks takes a cocktail sausage.

MR. JENKS
(to Semmi)
Do you have any Dijon mustard?

SEMMI
I don't know.

MR. JENKS
Well, look for it.

Mr. Jenks waves him away. Semmi could kill. He passes by Akeem.

SEMMI
Who do they think they are? I refuse to grovel for these peasants.

AKEEM
Semmi, please. Chill out.

Semmi leaves. Mr. McDowell approaches, smiling, his arm around Darryl.

MR. McDOWELL
Akeem, make sure everyone's glass is full. We're about to make a special announcement.

Mr. McDowell walks to the center of the room. He taps his glass.

MR. McDOWELL (CONT'D)
Can I have everyone's attention!
Would Mr. and Mrs. Jenks please join me? Mother Jenks, you come up here, too.

The Jenkxes get up and join Mr. McDowell, leaving three big wet greasy spots on the back of the couch.

MR. McDOWELL (CONT'D)
I just heard some news that has made me a very happy man. As you all know, Darryl and Lisa have been going together for some time.

Mr. McDowell beams a knowing smile at Lisa who looks confused. She has no idea what is going on.

(CONTINUED)

148 CONTINUED: (2)

148

MR. McDOWELL (CONT'D)
I'm pleased to announce that just
a few moments ago, Darryl popped
the big question ... and Lisa
happily accepted!

Lisa is stunned.

MR. McDOWELL (CONT'D)
So as it turns out ... this has
become an engagement party.
(holding up his glass)
To the bride and groom.

Mr. McDowell and the guests drink up. All are in a happy,
celebratory mood except for Lisa who stands alone, humiliated.
The Preacher comes up to her.

PREACHER
You know, God is smiling down upon
you. Because marriage is a
beautiful thing ...

Lisa walks away. This doesn't faze the Preacher who continues
talking to another guest.

Lisa crosses to Darryl, grabbing his arm.

LISA
I want to talk to you NOW.

They walk into the kitchen.

149 INT. McDOWELL'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

149

LISA (CONT'D)
(steaming)
The next time you and my father
get together to plan my life, I
wish you'd let me in on it!

DARRYL
It's not like that ...

He tries to put his arms around her. Lisa recoils.

LISA
Don't touch me.

(CONTINUED)

149 CONTINUED:

149

DARRYL
(smiling)
But baby, it's our engagement
party!

Lisa stares at him in disbelief. She storms out of the kitchen towards the backyard.

150 EXT. McDOWELL'S HOUSE BACKYARD - NIGHT - (MINUTES LATER)

150

Lisa sits in a swing set left over from her childhood, still smarting over what has happened. Akeem appears behind her, carrying a bottle of champagne and a glass.

AKEEM
Lisa ... ? Would you like some
champagne?

LISA
No, thanks. I don't really feel
like celebrating.
(Akeem starts to go)
Wait ... on second thought.
(holding out her empty
glass)
Fill it up.
(Akeem fills the glass)
You have some too.

Akeem fills the other glass and settles into a child's swing next to Lisa. Even in the swing, Akeem cannot conceal his regal bearing. He might as well be sitting on a golden throne.

LISA (CONT'D)
Akeem, if you want to hang out
with me, you gotta loosen up.

AKEEM
I can be loose.
(he slouches)
See?

LISA
Much better.

Lisa takes another sip of champagne, sighs, staring ahead.

AKEEM
Are you alright?

(CONTINUED)

150 CONTINUED:

150

LISA

I'm fine. I'm not going to be pressured into marriage ... by Darryl ... my father ... or anybody.

AKEEM

I know how you feel. In my country, many marriages are arranged. One should not marry out of obligation.

LISA

You're right. I mean ... how could I have even considered marrying a guy like Darryl?

AKEEM

I was wondering the same thing.

LISA

He just made me so furious back there. You don't think I over-reacted, do you?

AKEEM

No. First reactions are usually correct.

LISA

I don't know. I shouldn't be laying all my problems on you, Akeem.

AKEEM

I do not mind.

LISA

You know, you're very easy to talk to. I feel like I can tell you anything.

Patrice and some GIRLFRIENDS enter the yard, GIGGLING.

PATRICE

(teasing him)

Hey, Akeem! We need some more champagne over here.

Akeem gets up. Both he and Lisa seemed saddened by the interruption.

(CONTINUED)

150 CONTINUED: (2)

150

AKEEM
(ironically)
I almost forgot that I am here
in a domestic capacity.

LISA
Thanks for listening to me, Akeem.
I really appreciate it.

AKEEM
Anytime, Lisa McDowell.

Akeem walks back into the house, smiling, a spring in his step.

LISA
(playfully)
Hey, be careful. I think my
sister likes you.

151 INT. TENEMENT APARTMENT - DAY

151

Akeem enters from the bathroom, extremely upbeat. Semmi is still in his underwear, trying to cook breakfast. He blows the dust off the old microwave, opens the door and tosses in a dozen eggs still in the styrofoam carton.

AKEEM
Why aren't you dressed? You'll
be late for work.

SEMMI
(starting the microwave)
So what if I am?

AKEEM
We cannot afford to anger Mr.
McDowell, especially now that
things are going well.

SEMMI
(scoffing)
Going well? You have no chance
with this girl. She is getting
married to the one with the
dripping hair.

AKEEM
You are wrong.

SEMMI
Why don't you just marry her
sister? She has it hot for you.

(CONTINUED)

151 CONTINUED:

151

AKEEM

I know. You have to keep Patrice off my back. I am making excellent progress with Lisa. She may not know it yet, but she loves me.

SEMMI

Oh, sure she loves you. Let's see ... so far she has paid you the minimum wage and allowed you to pour champagne at her engagement party. I'd say she is clearly within your grasp!

AKEEM

I refuse to argue with you. Get dressed.

SEMMI

No. I am not going to work today!

AKEEM

Yes, you are!

SEMMI

I am sick.

AKEEM

You are not!

SEMMI

I am sick of living like a peasant! The man who does my toenails lives better than this! Look at this filth!

AKEEM

If you don't like it, then clean it up! I am a prince, and look ...

(picking up some fast food wrappers)

I am not afraid of garbage!

(kicking the wrappers at Semmi)

You want to live better? Fine! Fix this place up!!

The eggs in the microwave EXPLODE like hand grenades, ricocheting off the glass door. Akeem opens the microwave. He takes out a huge steaming mass of eggs, egg shells and bits of styrofoam. He drops it on the floor beside Semmi.

(CONTINUED)

151 CONTINUED: (2)

151

AKEEM (CONT'D)
There! Your breakfast is ready!

Akeem SLAMS the door behind him as he stomps out.

152 INT. TENEMENT - HALLWAY - DAY

152

AKEEM
Dribble from the foreskin of a
pig.

SEMMI (O.S.)
(through the door)
Eater of hyena squat!

153 EXT. McDOWELL'S RESTAURANT - DUSK

153

Akeem and Lisa are leaving work. He is patiently listening to her problems.

LISA
... maybe I've stayed with him
just because everyone expected
me to ... Do you know what I
mean?

(Akeem nods)
You must be tired of hearing about
my problems with Darryl.

AKEEM
No, not at all.

LISA
I feel like I owe you a favor.
Why don't you come to my house
and I'll fix you dinner? Patrice
will be there.

AKEEM
(quickly)
No. Let's go to my place.

LISA
Why?

(CONTINUED)

153 CONTINUED:

153

AKEEM
Because I uh ... want to cook
for you.

LISA
You cook?

AKEEM
(caught in the lie)
I uh ... dabble a bit.

LISA
Great. Tell you what. I'll buy
the groceries.

AKEEM
Fine. But I must warn you, my
apartment is very poor.

LISA
I don't care about that. I'd love
to see where you live.

154 INT. TENEMENT STAIRWELL - NIGHT

154

Akeem and Lisa walk up the stairs, carrying sacks of groceries.
Stu The Drunk lies passed out on the stairs.

AKEEM
You can step over this man. He
is harmless.

They step over him and onto his floor.

155 INT. TENEMENT FIFTH FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

155

Despite her good attitude, Lisa is not prepared for the
disgusting sight of the hallway.

AKEEM (CONT'D)
Once again, I must apologize for
the squalor of these surroundings.
I hope you won't think less of
me.

LISA
I know who you are, Akeem. I
don't judge people by how much
money they have.

(CONTINUED)

155 CONTINUED:

155

AKEEM
(pleased)
That's an excellent attitude!
(grabbing her by the
shoulders)
I can't tell you how happy I am
to hear you say that.
(walking to his door)
Well, here we are.
(opening the door)
Welcome to my humble abode ...

Akeem looks inside, shocked by what he sees ...

156 AKEEM'S P.O.V. ~ THE APARTMENT (REDONE)

156

It has been totally redone. In one day, Semmi has transformed it into a high-tech bachelor pad. The walls are crammed with every kind of audio and video equipment imaginable. Expensive track lighting runs across the ceiling. In the center of the room is a king-size waterbed. Semmi sits in a jacuzzi, contentedly smoking a cigar.

157 BACK TO SCENE

157

Akeem quickly SLAMS the door. Lisa is startled.

LISA
What's wrong?

AKEEM
Nothing ... I ... excuse me for
a moment.

Akeem steps inside, locking the door behind him, leaving Lisa outside, bewildered.

158 INSIDE THE APARTMENT

158

AKEEM
What have you done?

SEMMI
You told me to fix up the place.

AKEEM
I should kill you!

SEMMI
Why?

AKEEM
I am supposed to be a poor man!

159 OUT IN THE HALL

159

Lisa KNOCKS on the door.

LISA
Akeem ... Akeem.

Akeem opens the door with the chain locked. He speaks to her through the crack.

LISA (CONT'D)
Is everything all right?

AKEEM
Fine. Just let me tidy up.

He SLAMS the door in her face.

160 BACK IN THE APARTMENT

160

Akeem searches through Semmi's clothes.

SEMMI
(alarmed)
What are you doing?

Akeem finds what he's looking for. He pulls out a sterling silver money clip containing a thick stack of hundred dollar bills.

SEMMI (CONT'D)
Please, for God's sake. Don't take my pocket money.

AKEEM
If you have no more money, you can cause no more mischief.

Akeem stuffs the money into a paper bag and puts it under his coat. He tosses the money clip onto the dresser.

SEMMI
You are being unreasonable!

AKEEM
If you have ruined my chances with Lisa I shall never forgive you.

Akeem exits hurriedly.

161 INT. TENEMENT - HALLWAY - NIGHT

161

He smiles apologetically.

(CONTINUED)

161 CONTINUED:

161

AKEEM
I'm very sorry.

LISA
Can we go in now?

Lisa tries to enter the apartment. Akeem blocks her path.

AKEEM
No. I'm sorry. We can't.

LISA
Why not?

AKEEM
A rat. A big rat is inside.

LISA
You know what I think? I think there is no rat. I think you're just so ashamed of your apartment you can't let me see it.

AKEEM
(humbly)
Once again you have judged correctly.

LISA
Well, if it bothers you that much, we can go out.

AKEEM
(relieved)
That would be better.

162 EXT. N.D. JACKSON HEIGHTS STREET - NIGHT

162

As Akeem and Lisa walk down the street, they pass by a BUM.

AKEEM
Excuse me for a moment.

Akeem walks over and gives the Bum the paper bag which contains the money. He rejoins Lisa.

LISA
What did you give him?

AKEEM
Just some pocket change.

163 INT. NEIGHBORHOOD TAVERN - NIGHT

163

It is late at night. The place has pretty much emptied out. The BARTENDER is wiping down the bar as two MIDDLE-AGED CUSTOMERS finish their last round. A lone WAITRESS brings two after-dinner drinks to a booth where Akeem and Lisa have just finished a very pleasurable dinner. Over the jukebox we hear Sam Cooke's version of YOU SEND ME.

AKEEM
(holding up his glass)
To America.

They clink glasses.

LISA
Why'd you come here?

AKEEM
To find something special.

LISA
It's an awfully long way to travel.

AKEEM
No journey is too great when one finds what he seeks.

LISA
Does everyone in Africa talk like you?

AKEEM
Why? Do you not like it?

LISA
No, I love it. It's nice to be with a man who knows how to express himself.

There is a TAPPING at the window. It's the Bum. He's jubilant, holding up the bag of money, kissing it.

BUM
God bless you, man!

Akeem smiles uncomfortably. The Bum leaves. Lisa looks at Akeem admiringly.

LISA
You have the most amazing effect on people.

(CONTINUED)

163 CONTINUED:

163

AKEEM
(nervously)
No, I don't.

LISA
It's true. Look at that guy at
the basketball game the other day.
People love you.
(she takes a sip)
I bet where you're from, the women
practically throw themselves at
your feet.

AKEEM
What makes you say that?

LISA
Because you've got a kind of inner
glow. Like you're above anything
petty. It's almost regal.

Akeem laughs nervously.

LISA (CONT'D)
What did you do back home?

AKEEM
I was in uh ... my family
business.

LISA
What's that?

AKEEM
Goat herding.

LISA
Really?

AKEEM
Does this surprise you?

LISA
No, it's just that you seem so
educated.

AKEEM
Well, the life of a goat herder
is not all that demanding. The
goats pretty much take care of
themselves. It leaves one with
a great deal of time to read.

(CONTINUED)

163 CONTINUED: (2)

163

The waitress brings the check. Akeem reaches for it. Lisa puts her hand on his.

LISA
Please ... let me.

AKEEM
It's not right. I should pay.

LISA
Akeem, I wish you'd stop worrying about being poor. If I wanted a wealthy guy I'd be with Darryl ... not you.

There is beat of silence as Akeem and Lisa look at one another, their hands still touching. In the background, we can hear Sam Cooke singing.

SAM COOKE
DARLING, YOU SEND ME. HONEST YOU DO ...

AKEEM
Would you like to dance?

LISA
Yes.

They get up from the table. Akeem takes Lisa in his arms and they begin to dance, slowly, gracefully. Lisa places her head on his shoulder. He clutches her closer to him, and now they are barely moving, just holding each other tight. Lisa looks into Akeem's eyes.

LISA (CONT'D)
What about Patrice?

AKEEM
I'm not interested in Patrice.

LISA
What about Darryl?

AKEEM
I'm not interested in him either.

They kiss. As the song ends, they remain in an embrace, lost in their own world.

164 INT. BUS STATION - NIGHT

164

A sour, pudgy WESTERN UNION EMPLOYEE sits behind the counter reading the telegram Semmi has just handed him.

SOUR EMPLOYEE

You actually want to send this?

SEMMI

Why? What is wrong? Read it to me.

SOUR EMPLOYEE

(Laying on the sarcasm
with a heavy Queens
accent)

Sire ... Akeem and I have depleted our funds. Kindly send two hundred thousand dollars immediately as we are in dire straits. Thanks, Semmi.

SEMMI

Should I make it four hundred thousand?

SOUR EMPLOYEE

(sarcastically)

Are ya' sure that's gonna be enough?

SEMMI

You're right. Make it five hundred.

SOUR EMPLOYEE

(humoring him)

As long as we're askin', why don't we go for a cool million?

SEMMI

(thinking about it)

You don't think that's too much?

SOUR EMPLOYEE

Naaaah!

165 EXT. "MY-T SHARP" BARBER SHOP - NIGHT

165

Semmi strolls by the open door of the barber shop on his way back to the apartment. Clarence (Eddie), Morris (Arsinio), Sweets, and The Old Jewish Man (Eddie) see him coming.

(CONTINUED)

165 CONTINUED:

165

CLARENCE

Here he is. Better hurry your ass on home. Your buddy's got more action than he can handle.

SWEETS

Yeah. He left here with one chick. And now he's got another one waitin' for him upstairs.

OLD JEWISH MAN

He keeps that up he's going to wear out his shvance.

Semmi is alarmed. He starts off toward the apartment, in a hurry. Clarence calls after him.

CLARENCE

If you find yourself completely overrun with nookie, send some of it down here. We may be old, but we sturdy.

(to Sweets)

Ever tell you about the time I boned Lola Falana?

SWEETS

You never boned no Lola Falana.

166 INT. TENEMENT FIFTH FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

166

Semmi opens the door and steps inside the apartment.

167 INT. TENEMENT APARTMENT (REDONE) - NIGHT

167

Patrice is sitting on the water bed.

PATRICE

Okay. What's going on?

SEMMI

Patrice ...?

PATRICE

I came to see Akeem. What are you two involved in? You can't afford all this stuff on your salary.

SEMMI

We save our money.

(CONTINUED)

167 CONTINUED:

167

PATRICE

Oh, yeah.

(she holds up the money
clip)

Explain this.

SEMMI

It's a money clip.

PATRICE

How come it's from the Royal
Palace at Zamunda?

SEMMI

(weakly)

A souvenir?

PATRICE

I don't think so. I think you
stole it from some kind of African
King. I think you're
international terrorists. And
I'm callin' the police.

She starts to leave.

SEMMI

No, don't!

PATRICE

Then tell me the truth. Now.

168 EXT. TENEMENT STREET - NIGHT

168

Akeem is walking home, singing YOU SEND ME.

169 INT. TENEMENT STAIRWELL - NIGHT

169

He is elated as he bounds up the stairs over Stu the drunk.

170 INT. TENEMENT FIFTH FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

170

Akeem opens the door to the apartment.

AKEEM

Semmi ... I just had the most
wonderful evening with Lisa. We
danced all ...

He enters the apartment.

171 INT. TENEMENT APARTMENT - NIGHT

171

Semmi is necking with Patrice on the bed. She looks up. Semmi is frustrated.

PATRICE

Oh, hi, Akeem. Semmi told me everything. I'm sorry things didn't work out between you and me ... but you understand.

(kissing Semmi)

Good-night, sweet prince.

She gets up to leave.

SEMMI

Remember you must not tell a soul.

PATRICE

(blowing Semmi a kiss)

Your secret is safe with me, Your Highness.

She leaves.

AKEEM

If you're the prince, then who am I?

SEMMI

(sheepishly)

My servant.

Akeem glares at Semmi.

172 INT. McDOWELL'S RESTAURANT - LISA'S OFFICE - DAY

172

Lisa is at her desk working. Mr. McDowell enters, carrying a large floral arrangement, trying hard to be cheerful.

MR. McDOWELL

Boy, these smell nice.

(Lisa ignores him)

Darryl must be spending a fortune on flowers.

LISA

Dad, stay out of this.

Lisa gets up from the chair and puts on her jacket.

MR. McDOWELL

Where you going?

(CONTINUED)

172 CONTINUED:

172

LISA
To a museum with Akeem.

MR. McDOWELL
I don't like that one bit.

LISA
What's wrong with Akeem?

MR. McDOWELL
You told me yourself he was a goat
herder.

(pleading)
Why won't you marry Darryl? He's
nice to you ... dresses good ...

LISA
You only like Darryl because he's
rich.

*

She walks into the hallway.

MR. McDOWELL
Baby, please. I just don't want
to see you struggle like your
mother and I did.

LISA
I know. I'll see you later, Dad.

She leaves.

173 OMITTED

173*

174 OMITTED

174*

175 INT. TENEMENT APARTMENT - DAY

175

Akeem is dressed to go out in a sports jacket. Semmi is stuffing his own clothes into a duffel bag, getting ready to move.

(CONTINUED)

175 CONTINUED:

175

SEMMI

What am I supposed to tell
Patrice?

AKEEM

(disdainfully)
I am sure you'll think of
something.

There is a KNOCK at the door. Akeem answers it. It's the Landlord.

LANDLORD

You boys wanted to see me?

AKEEM

Yes.

The Landlord walks in and looks around at the high-tech splendor of the room. His mouth drops open.

LANDLORD

Goddamn! What the hell have you done in here?!

AKEEM

I am afraid my friend Semmi has altered the apartment. Perhaps you would be willing to exchange it for another.

LANDLORD

(Suspicious)
Why? This stuff ain't hot, is it?

AKEEM

No, no. I want to bring a young lady here and I cannot let her see me living like this.

LANDLORD

Tell you what. I'm gonna let you stay in my apartment and I'll move up here.

AKEEM

Does your apartment look poor?

LANDLORD

Yeah. It's a real shit hole.
You'll love it. Here's the key
... 1-A ... first floor.

(CONTINUED)

175 CONTINUED: (2)

175

AKEEM
You are too kind.

176 EXT. TENEMENT - DAY - (MINUTES LATER)

176

Akeem walks out and heads down the street on his way to the date with Lisa. As Akeem disappears from view, we CRANE DOWN to * the street below.

The ROYAL MOTORCADE is approaching. The lead car, a black Mercedes with Zamundian flags flying from the fenders, SCREECHES to a halt in front of Akeem's building. Several GUARDS leap out at once. Right behind them are two limousines -- a long one and an even longer one. Oha and the ROSE BEARERS jump out, hastily taking their positions.

The KING'S OWN LIMOUSINE wheels up to the curb. It is the longest of them all, a black custom Mercedes stretch. Oha opens the door. The ROSE BEARERS TOSS PETALS on the sidewalk as King Jaffe Joffer gets out, followed by Aoleon. They look at the squalid neighborhood.

KING
The place called Manhattan was dreadful enough ... this is unspeakable.
(to the Queen)
Perhaps you better wait here. *

The King, preceded by rose bearers and surrounded by servants, marches grandly towards the barber shop.

177 INT. "MY-T SHARP" BARBER SHOP - DAY

177

Clarence (Eddie), Sweets, Morris (Arsinio) and the Old Jewish Man (Eddie) are sitting around as usual.

CLARENCE
Joe Louis would mop the floor with his ass. Compared to Joe, Mike Tyson hits like a girl.

SWEETS
Bullshit.
(spying the King's Procession)
Who the hell is this?

CLARENCE
Looks like the Wise Men.

(CONTINUED)

177 CONTINUED:

177

The doors to the barber shop burst open as the guards enter, followed by the rose bearers. The King strides into the room with the entourage close behind.

CLARENCE (CONT'D)

What's up, brother? You too late
for the Christmas pageant.

KING

I am King Jaffe Joffer, ruler of
Zamunda.

CLARENCE

Well, take a seat. Number two
chair be free in a minute.

The Old Jewish Man reaches out and touches the King's robe.

OLD JEWISH MAN

Nice. What is this? Velvet?

KING

I have come for my son Akeem.

CLARENCE

Who?

OLD JEWISH MAN

He must be talkin' about the
African fellah. Nice boy.

CLARENCE

Oh, yeah. He's around somewhere.
Lives upstairs ... the fifth
floor.

Without a word, the King spins around and marches out. Clarence shouts at the rose bearers as they depart.

CLARENCE (CONT'D)

Hey! Who's gonna clean up thsse
flowers?

CUT TO:

178 INT. TENEMENT STAIRWELL - DAY

178

We are CLOSE on Stu the drunk who is sprawled across the landing. He is sprinkled with rose petals as the rose bearers step over him, followed by the King, the Queen and the whole entourage.

179 INT. TENEMENT APARTMENT (REDONE) - DAY (SAME TIME)

179

The Landlord is living it up, soaking in the jacuzzi, listening to his new stereo. There is a loud RAP at the door.

LANDLORD
(grandly)
You may enter!

The door bursts open and the royal procession enters. The Landlord's jaw drops as he sees the King.

KING
You are not Akeem.

LANDLORD
I know that.

The King sees a photograph of Akeem hanging on the wall. It's an "Employee of the Month" certificate from McDowell's. The King is outraged at the sight of his son wearing a paper McDowell's hat.

KING
What is this?

LANDLORD
A photograph.

KING
I know that. What is this ...
McDowell's?

LANDLORD
A place over on Queens Boulevard.
I think that's where he works.

KING
(enraged)
My son works! Where is he now?

LANDLORD
I don't know. He moved downstairs
... apartment 1-A.

The King turns and exits, preceded by his huge entourage.

180 INT. TENEMENT STAIRWELL - DAY

180

Once again the members of the procession step over Stu the drunk who is now almost completely covered in rose petals.

181 INT. TENEMENT FIRST FLOOR HALLWAY - APARTMENT 1-A - DAY

181

Oha BANGS on the door. Semmi comes out, surprised to see the King and his entourage.

(CONTINUED)

181 CONTINUED:

181

SEMMI
Your Majesty! What are you doing here?

KING
I received your telegram. Where is Akeem?

SEMMI
He went out.
(trying to butter him up)
So how was your flight?
Comfortable, I trust.

KING
(grabbing Semmi by the collar)
Your only job was to look after Akeem. How could you let him come to such a pass?

SEMMI
Akeem will not listen to me. He has gone quite mad.

KING
Have no fear. We shall return to Zamunda immediately.

*

SEMMI
(groveling)
Thank you, Your Majesty.

KING
Semmi, you have disgraced yourself and you must be punished. Confine yourself to our royal suite at the Walforf-Astoria.

SEMMI
(concealing his joy)
If you insist.

KING
(to a Servant)
See that he puts on some decent attire.
(to two Beautiful Maidens)
And I want you to bathe him thoroughly.

(CONTINUED)

181 CONTINUED: (2)

181

SEMMI
(trying to be somber)
Don't worry, Sire. I will take
this punishment like a man.

182 INT. THE CENTER FOR AFRICAN ART IN MANHATTAN - NIGHT

182

Akeem and Lisa are among the CROWD who have gathered for the opening of an African Art Exhibit. Lisa looks especially pretty. She is wearing a nice dress -- and the ruby earrings Akeem sent her.

They walk along, examining the exotic masks, carved wooden figures and pieces of sculpture.

LISA
I love African Art.

They stop to examine a piece of sculpture which depicts two lovers entwined in an embrace.

AKEEM
Are you familiar with Buale
sculpture?

LISA
No.

AKEEM
The Buale believe that couples on earth were lovers before in the spiritual world.

LISA
Really? That's nice.

AKEEM
It is said that those who touch the sculpture will be blessed by the Gods of Fertility.

Lisa closes her eyes and places her hand on the sculpture. Akeem places his hand on hers.

183 INT. CENTER - ZAMUNDA AREA - NIGHT

183

They continue through the exhibit. One room of the center is displaying the art of Zamunda.

(CONTINUED)

183 CONTINUED:

183

LISA

Oh, look. Zamunda. That's where you're from isn't it?

AKEEM

Yes.

LISA

What's it like?

AKEEM

Oh, it is very beautiful. You would love it. The people are so friendly. Believe me -- they would treat you like a queen.

Lisa smiles. She examines some works of art. Akeem looks at the far wall and is instantly alarmed at what he sees.

184 HIS P.O.V. - A PORTRAIT OF THE ROYAL FAMILY

184

Akeem in his prince's attire, posing with his parents. Next to the painting is a plaque which reads "This exhibit loaned by the royal family of Zamunda."

185 BACK TO SCENE

185

Akeem instantly grabs Lisa and kisses her passionately to keep her from seeing the painting. Lisa is surprised but at the same time pleased by his sudden passion.

LISA

Akeem ... people will see us.

AKEEM

Let them see.

He kisses her again, turning her away from the painting.

LISA

I've never seen you like this.

AKEEM

It's the gods of fertility. Let's go, Lisa.

LISA

Now?

AKEEM

Yes, right now.

(CONTINUED)

185 CONTINUED:

185

He tries to rush her out of the room. Lisa stops him. The painting of Akeem is right behind her, but miraculously she has not seen it.

LISA

I don't want to rush into anything
... unless it's serious.

Akeem kisses her again. A middle-aged MUSEUM GUARD is standing nearby, pretending not to notice.

LISA (CONT'D)

Where do you want to go?

AKEEM

My apartment.

LISA

Are you sure?

AKEEM

I'm very sure.

They hurry out, arm in arm. The Museum Guard shakes his head. He looks around to see if anyone's watching. He rubs the fertility sculpture.

CUT TO:

186 INT. McDOWELL'S RESTAURANT - DINING AREA - NIGHT

186

Maurice and the other employees gawk at the sight of the King, Queen, and entourage in their magnificent clothes, striding toward the counter.

MAURICE

(awestruck)

Can I help you? —

187 INT. McDOWELL'S RESTAURANT - McDOWELL'S OFFICE - NIGHT
(SAME TIME)

187

Mr. McDowell is on the phone.

MR. McDOWELL

Listen, Darryl. Come on over to the house tonight about nine.

Lisa should be home by then.

(pause)

Yeah, don't worry, buddy. We gonna work something out. Okay.

(CONTINUED)

187 CONTINUED:

187

Maurice hurries in, all excited.

MAURICE
Mister McDowell ... somebody here
to see you.

MR. McDOWELL
Are they from McDonald's?

MAURICE
I don't think so!

Mr. McDowell hurries out to the restaurant.

188 INT. McDOWELL'S RESTAURANT - DINING AREA - NIGHT

188

The King and Queen and their minions are waiting impatiently.

MR. McDOWELL
What can I do for you?

KING
Oha.

OHA
He is King Jaffee Joffer, ruler of
Zamunda. He is searching for his
son Akeem.

MR. McDOWELL
Your son?

KING
Yes. My son the Prince.

MR. McDOWELL
(amazed)
A prince?! Are you sure?

OHA
Of course. Prince Akeem is the
sole heir to the throne of
Zamunda.

MR. McDOWELL
I knew there was something special
about that boy!

KING
Can you tell me where he might be?

MR. McDOWELL
He's out with my lovely daughter
Lisa.
(more)

(CONTINUED)

188 CONTINUED:

188

MR. McDOWELL (CONT'D)
You know it's a beautiful thing
when two children can get together
...

KING
Of all the things he could do to
disgrace me. I am staying at the
Waldorf Astoria. When you see him,
call me.

*

MR. McDOWELL
I'll tell him you're here.

KING
No. Do not alert him to my
presence. I shall deal with him
myself.

(handing him some money)
For your trouble.

MR. McDOWELL
Thank you, your royalness.

The King and company exit as quickly as they came. Mr. McDowell
watches them take off in the magnificent limousines. He can't
believe it! He looks at the bill in his hand --

189 INSERT - THE CURRENCY

189

It is a hundred-pound note from Zamunda, imprinted with a royal
portrait of Akeem.

190 MR. McDOWELL

190

stares at the bill, swallowing hard.

MR. McDOWELL (CONT'D)
Damn!

CUT TO:

191 EXT. TENEMENT STREET - NIGHT

191

A taxi pulls up. Akeem gets out, holding the door for Lisa.
Suddenly Akeem sees something on the sidewalk that makes his
heart freeze -- a path of rose petals. He knows his father has
arrived.

AKEEM
Wait!

(CONTINUED)

191 CONTINUED:

191

LISA
What?

AKEEM
We cannot go in.

LISA
Why not?

AKEEM
I will be right back. Stay in
the car.

Akeem rushes inside.

192 INT. TENEMENT FIRST FLOOR HALLWAY - APARTMENT 1-A - NIGHT

192

Stuck on the front door of Apt. 1-A is a note which reads "I have gone to Royal Suite at Waldorf-Astoria ... Semmi". Akeem tears down the note, stuffing it into his pocket. He dashes out.

193 EXT. TENEMENT STREET - NIGHT

193

AKEEM
We must leave.

LISA
I dont' care about the
apartment ...

AKEEM
It is not that. This is wrong,
Lisa. I feel I am rushing you.

LISA
No you're not.

AKEEM
It is better we take our time.

LISA
But I want to.

AKEEM
No, it is better I take you home.

LISA
(disappointed)
Oh.

(CONTINUED)

193 CONTINUED:

193

They get back into the cab and drive away.

CUT TO:

194 INT. THE McDOWELL HOUSE - FOYER AND LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

194

Akeem and Lisa enter. Mr. McDowell greets them enthusiastically, throwing his arms around Akeem, pounding him on the back.

MR. McDOWELL

Akeem! It's good to see you!

AKEEM

(puzzled)

It is good to see you, too.

MR. McDOWELL

Come inside and have a little drink.

AKEEM

Perhaps another time. I really cannot stay.

MR. McDOWELL

Oh, come on. We don't spend enough time talking, you and me.

They walk into the living room.

Mr. McDowell POPS open a bottle of champagne, pouring a glass for Akeem, Lisa and himself.

MR. McDOWELL (CONT'D)

Drink up, children. Enjoy!

(bowing)

I'll be back in a minute.

We FOLLOW Mr. McDowell as he rushes into the kitchen.

195 INT. McDOWELL'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

195

He takes a piece of paper out of his pocket, picks up the phone and dials quickly.

(CONTINUED)

195 CONTINUED:

195

MR. McDOWELL (CONT'D)
 (into the phone)
 King Jaffe Joffer's room.
 (beat)
 Hello, King. Cleo McDowell. The
 kids are here.
 (beat)
 It's 2432 Derby Avenue in Jamaica
 Estates. Looking forward to ...

Obviously the King has hung up. Mr. McDowell walks out.

196 INT. McDOWELL'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

196

AKEEM
 (to Mr. McDowell)
 I really must be going.

MR. McDOWELL
 Oh, you can stay a little longer.
 Have a seat.
 (pointing to a Lazy-boy
 lounger)
 Sit in my chair.

The DOORBELL RINGS.

MR. McDOWELL (CONT'D)
 Excuse me for a second.

Mr. McDowell goes to ...

197 THE FRONT DOOR

197

He opens the door. It's Darryl, carrying a bouquet of flowers,
 wearing his Sunday best smile. Mr. McDowell SLAMS the door in
 his face. He walks back into ...

198 THE LIVING ROOM

198

LISA
 Who was that?

MR. McDOWELL
 Just one of those Jehovah
 Witnesses.

The DOORBELL RINGS again.

MR. McDOWELL (CONT'D)
 'Scuse me.

(CONTINUED)

198 CONTINUED:

198

Mr. McDowell leaves the room and opens ...

199 THE FRONT DOOR

199

Darryl is standing there, perplexed.

MR. McDOWELL

(to Darryl)

The girl doesn't like you anymore!
Can't you get it through your
head?

DARRYL

But you told me to come ov...

BAM! Mr. McDowell slams the door in his face. He walks back
into ...

200 THE LIVING ROOM

200

MR. McDOWELL

Now where were we ...

We hear a LOUD KNOCKING at the door. McDowell goes back to
the front door and opens it.

201 THE FRONT DOOR

201*

The puzzled Darryl is still there.

MR. McDOWELL
I warned you! Git him, Nikki!

The McDowell's poodle charges out of the door, snarling, chasing
Darryl away.

202 BACK IN THE LIVING ROOM

202

Mr. McDowell returns, all smiles.

AKEEM
(getting out of the
chair)
I appreciate your hospitality,
Mr. McDowell, but ...

MR. McDOWELL
Oh, you can stay a little longer.
I got some delicious hors
d'oeuvres in the oven. I'll see
if they're ready.

Mr. McDowell exits to the kitchen.

(CONTINUED)

202 CONTINUED:

202

AKEEM
Lisa, I must leave.

LISA
(taking Akeem's hand)
Is something wrong, Akeem?

AKEEM
(putting his hands on
her shoulders)
I promise to tell you when the
time is right. But now I must
go. Say goodbye to your father
for me.

Akeem leaves.

Mr. McDowell enters carrying a tray of cocktail wieners.

MR. McDOWELL
Where's Akeem?

LISA
He said he had to leave.

MR. McDOWELL
He can't leave!

LISA
Daddy, what's going on? Why are
you being so nice to Akeem?

MR. McDOWELL
I like the boy.

LISA
(suspicious)
What are you up to?

MR. McDOWELL
Nothing. Why? A man has a right
to change his mind, don't he?

LISA
(onto him)
Daddy ...

MR. McDOWELL
The two of you make a beautiful
couple.

LISA
Daddy ...

(CONTINUED)

202 CONTINUED: (2)

202

MR. McDOWELL
He's a fine young man.

LISA
Daddy ...!

MR. McDOWELL
(not able to contain
himself any longer)
Okay! He's rich! He's rich!
Look! The boy's got his own
money.
(taking out the hundred
pound note)
When I say he's got MONEY ... THE
BOY'S GOT HIS OWN MONEY!

203 INSERT -

203

The Zamundan note with Akeem's face.

204 BACK TO SCENE

204

Lisa looks at the bill, shocked.

MR. McDOWELL (CONT'D)
He's a prince. You've hit the
jackpot! Your little goat herder
makes Darryl look like a welfare
case!

204A EXT. McDOWELL HOUSE - NIGHT (RAIN)

204A

Lisa looks out the window as it begins to rain.

205 EXT. PARK AVENUE - NIGHT (RAIN)

205

It's RAINING. There is an immense traffic jam.

206 INSIDE A CAB - MOVING - NIGHT (RAIN)

206

Akeem is restless. He sees:

207 HIS P.O.V. OUT THE FRONT WINDOW

207

The hotel -- a block ahead.

208 BACK INSIDE THE CAB

208

AKEEM
(to Cabbie)
Let me out here.

(CONTINUED)

208 CONTINUED:

208

Akeem pays him and jumps out of the cab.

209 EXT. WALDORF-ASTORIA - NIGHT (RAIN)

209

He runs down the rain-soaked street to the hotel.

210 INT. WALDORF-ASTORIA - ROYAL SUITE - NIGHT (RAIN)
(MOMENTS LATER)

210

Semmi is in the tub with two Maidens. Akeem runs in, wet from the rain.

AKEEM

Semmi!

SEMMI

Good news, Akeem, we've been rescued.

AKEEM

Where are my parents?!

SEMMI

They have gone to the McDowell's house looking for you.

AKEEM

(starting to leave)

Come with me.

SEMMI

Where are we going?

AKEEM

Back to Queens.

SEMMI

(to the Maidens)

Don't move, girls. I'll be right back.

(to Akeem)

Your parents are very upset. You had better change your clothes.

211 EXT. WALDORF-ASTORIA - NIGHT (RAIN) (MOMENTS LATER)

211

Akeem, now dressed in his princely clothes, jumps into a royal limo with Semmi. The car speeds away.

212 INT. McDOWELL HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (RAIN)

212

Mr. McDowell is pacing, worried.

MR. McDOWELL
Where could he have gone?

LISA
I don't know and I don't care.

There is a loud KNOCK at the door.

MR. McDOWELL
That's probably his folks.
Promise me you'll be polite.

LISA
I don't want to talk to anybody.

Lisa stalks off to her room. Mr. McDowell answers the door. The King and Queen are waiting impatiently. The entourage, as always, is with them.

MR. McDOWELL
Oh, look who's here! Come in,
come in. Welcome to Case de
McDowell.

The King and Queen enter the house.

KING
Where is Akeem?

MR. McDOWELL
Oh, he uh ... just stepped out.
Probably went for pizza. You know
how these youngsters are.
(to the Queen)
This must be your lovely wife.
How are you today?

QUEEN
(being polite)
Fine, thank you.

MR. McDOWELL
Gee, I don't know whether to kiss
your hand or shake it or bow or
what. Come on in ... take a load
off. Your son oughta be back any
minute.

Mr. McDowell leads them into his den.

213 INT. McDOWELL'S HOUSE - HIS DEN - NIGHT (RAIN)

213

MR. McDOWELL
 Sit down, sit down.
 (to the Queen)
 Try the Lazy-Boy. It's real
 comfortable.

The Queen sits tentatively in the recliner.

MR. McDOWELL (CONT'D)
 Here ... put your feet up.

Mr. McDowell pulls the lever on the chair. The Queen rocks back and her feet shoot up. She is taken by surprise.

QUEEN
 Oh.
 (trying gamely to be
 polite)
 Very nice.

Mr. McDowell offers the King a tray of hors d'oeuvres.

MR. McDOWELL
 Here you go. Try some of these
 little pigs-in-a-blanket. They're
 the frozen kind, but you'd never
 know it.

KING
 (impatiently)
 You told me my son was here.

MR. McDOWELL
 You know, my daughter Lisa might know
 where he went. She and Akeem have gotten
 quite close. As a matter of fact,
 I wouldn't be surprised if
 matrimony was on the horizon.

KING
 Where is your daughter? I want
 to speak to her at once.

MR. McDOWELL
 She's in her room.

214 INT. McDOWELL'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT (RAIN)

214

Mr. McDowell takes the King to Lisa's room. He KNOCKS on the closed door.

(CONTINUED)

214 CONTINUED:

214

MR. McDOWELL
(cheerfully)
Sweetheart, there's somebody here
to see you.

The King opens the door and enters.

215 INT. McDOWELL'S HOUSE - LISA'S ROOM - NIGHT (RAIN)

215

Lisa looks up, surprised.

MR. McDOWELL
Lisa ... this is Akeem's daddy
... the King.

KING
Leave us.

Mr. McDowell exits.

KING (CONT'D)
I understand you are seeing my
son.

LISA
I was seeing him.

KING
Then I am sure he told you about
his wife in Zamunda?

LISA
(unbelieving)
He's married?

KING
No, but he will be soon. We have
already chosen his Bride. So you
see, he is not at all serious
about you. Akeem came to America
to sow his royal oats. You were
merely a momentary diversion.

LISA
(very upset)
Excuse me, I need to be alone.

Lisa runs out of the room.

*

216 INT. McDOWELL'S HOUSE - HIS DEN - NIGHT (RAIN)

Mr. McDowell is trying to entertain the Queen.

MR. McDOWELL
Are you comfortable, Mrs. uh ...
I'm not sure what to call you.
My name's Cleo.

QUEEN
(shaking his hand)
Nice to meet you, Cleo. My name
is Aoleon.

Lisa comes in, distraught.

MR. McDOWELL
Lisa, honey, where you goin'?
I want you to meet the Queen.

The Queen looks at Lisa, concerned.

QUEEN
Are you all right, my dear?

LISA
I'm sorry I have to get out
of here.

Lisa runs out.

MR. McDOWELL
(calling after her)
What's the matter, baby?

The King returns.

MR. McDOWELL (CONT'D)
What did you say to my daughter?

KING
I told her the truth. That Akeem
is not interested in her.

QUEEN
How can you be so sure?

KING
Oh, come now. Our son cannot
consort with such a girl.

MR. McDOWELL
Now, wait a minute ...

(CONTINUED)

216 CONTINUED:

216

KING

Oha ...

Oha takes out the royal checkbook and begins to write out a check.

KING (CONT'D)

I realize you have been inconvenienced and I am prepared to compensate you. Shall we say one million American dollars?

*

MR. McDOWELL

No way.

KING

All right. Two million then.

Oha hands Mr. McDowell the check. Mr. McDowell tears it up.

MR. McDOWELL

You ain't got enough money to buy off my daughter.

KING

Nonsense.

QUEEN

Jaffe, apologize to Mr. McDowell.

KING

I will do no such thing. The man is beneath me and so is his daughter.

Mr. McDowell has had enough.

MR. McDOWELL

All right! Now you gone too far!
I don't give a damn who you are.
This is America, Jack.

*

(taking off his jacket)

Say one more word about Lisa and
I'll break my foot off on your
royal ass.

*

KING

Pardon me?

*

Patrice comes in.

PATRICE

What's everybody yelling about?

(CONTINUED)

216 CONTINUED: (2)

216

MR. McDOWELL
Their son is in love with your
sister and the King can't handle
it.

PATRICE
(to the King)
No, he's not. The Prince is in
love with me.

Akeem and Semmi come running in, wet from the rain. The Queen
embraces Akeem.

AKEEM KING *
Are you all right? QUEEN *

AKEEM
Yes, I am fine.

PATRICE
Why are you hugging him? He's
just a servant.
(pointing at Semmi)
He's the prince.

KING
Who told you that?

Semmi tries to smile, but all the courage drains from his face
as the King glares at him.

PATRICE
(shocked)
You mean Akeem's the prince?!

MR. McDOWELL
Yeah, and he's in love with Lisa.

PATRICE —
(whining)
How come she always gets the good
ones!!

Patrice stomps back into her room.

AKEEM
Where is Lisa?

MR. McDOWELL
Your daddy just ran her off.

(CONTINUED)

216 CONTINUED: (3)

216

AKEEM
(to the King)
What did you tell her?

KING
It is of no consequence. Come.
We are going back to Zamunda.

AKEEM
Not without Lisa.

QUEEN
Then you are serious about her?

AKEEM
Mother, I love her.

QUEEN
Then go after her!

Akeem dashes back out the door.

KING
(calling after him)
Akeem! I forbid you to ...

QUEEN
Oh, put a sock in it, Jaffe! The
boy is in love.

217 INT. McDOWELL'S HOUSE - PATRICE'S ROOM - NIGHT (RAIN) 217
(SAME TIME)

Patrice is on her bed crying. There is a KNOCK on the sliding glass door to the patio. Darryl is standing outside in the rain, dripping wet, his gerry curls a mass of limp tangles. Patrice composes herself as she lets Darryl in.

PATRICE
Darryl! What happened?

DARRYL
Lisa dumped me.

PATRICE
(consoling him)
Aww, I know. You poor thing.
(snuggling up to him)
The first thing we've got to do
is get you out of these wet
clothes.

A218 EXT. CAR WASH - NIGHT (RAIN)

A218*

Lisa walks by, then Akeem in LIMO drives by looking for her. *

218 EXT. QUEENS BLVD. - NIGHT (RAIN)

218

It's still RAINING HARD. Lisa is walking determinedly down the street, wearing no coat, only the dress she wore to the museum.

219 THE ROYAL LIMOUSINE (RAIN)

219

glides down the rain-slicked street. Akeem looks out the window, searching for Lisa. He spots her.

AKEEM

Lisa!

Lisa sees Akeem and starts walking faster, heading for a subway station just ahead.

AKEEM (CONT'D)

Lisa, wait!

The car stops. Akeem hops out into the pouring rain. Oha is right behind him holding an umbrella.

AKEEM (CONT'D)

Leave me alone.

He runs after Lisa who disappears into the subway station.

CUT TO:

220 INT. THE SUBWAY STATION - NIGHT

220

Lisa, who is now soaking wet, boards a waiting train. Akeem leaps over the turnstile and runs to the train, wedging his leg in the door just as it's about to close.

221 INT. TRAIN - 1ST CAR - NIGHT

221

Lisa walks quickly through the car. Akeem follows her, pushing past the crowd of PASSENGERS. The train STARTS MOVING.

AKEEM

Lisa ... please listen to me.

She opens the door and walks into the next car.

222 INT. TRAIN - 2ND CAR - NIGHT

222

Akeem is right behind her.

(CONTINUED)

222 CONTINUED:

222

LISA

Just because you have money, it
doesn't mean you can play with
people's feelings.

AKEEM

I did not mean to hurt you.

LISA

At least now I know who sent me
these.

(she takes off the ruby
earrings)

Well, I don't want them.
(tossing them at him)

And I don't want you.

Lisa stalks off into the next car.

223 INT. TRAIN - 3RD CAR - NIGHT

223

This is the last car of the train. She can go no farther. Akeem enters. The few PASSENGERS who are riding this car stare curiously at the sight of this beautiful wet girl and a man in a long flowing robe.

AKEEM

Please ... I love you, Lisa.

LISA

What about the woman you're
supposed to marry?

Several of the passengers put down their newspapers. This is getting interesting.

AKEEM

I do not love her. Why do you
think I came to America?

LISA

Your father told me. To sow your
royal oats.

AKEEM

No, I came to Queens to find a
bride. I came here to find you.

LISA

Then why did you lie to me? Why
didn't you tell me you were a
prince?

(CONTINUED)

223 CONTINUED:

223

AKEEM

I wanted you to love me for who
I am.

LISA

(beginning to wear down)
I'm not sure who you are.

AKEEM

I am the man you fell in love
with. Should it make any
difference that I am a prince?

LISA

It shouldn't but ...

KEEEM

All you have to do is tell me you
did not love me when I was a
goatherder, and I will never
bother you again.

Lisa begins to soften.

LISA

It would never work out. We're
too different. You're royalty
for God's sake!

AKEEM

Do you want me to renounce my
throne?

(throwing his robe onto
the floor)

There! I renounce my throne.

(loudly to the other
passengers)

I renounce my throne!

The Passengers look at him like he's nuts.

LISA

I can't let you do that.

AKEEM

I do not care about the crown.
I only care about you. Marry me,
Lisa McDowell.

Lisa wavers. AN ELDERLY PASSENGER is carried away by the
moment.

(CONTINUED)

223 CONTINUED: (2)

223

ELDERLY PASSENGER
(in a thick Queens
accent)

Aw, go on, honey. Take a chance.

223A INT. SUBWAY STATION - NIGHT

223A

The SUBWAY STOPS at a station.

LISA
I'm sorry. I can't. Good-bye,
Akeem.

Lisa hurries off the train. Akeem watches, crestfallen, as she runs out of the station. A MIDDLE-AGED PASSENGER steps out onto the platform. She stops and says to Akeem:

MIDDLE-AGED LADY
(trying to cheer him
up)
If you're really a prince, I'll
marry you.

224 ON THE PLATFORM

224

Akeem hands the woman the ruby earrings. The DOORS CLOSE AND THE TRAIN TAKES OFF, taking a dejected Akeem with it.

225 EXT. WALDORF ASTORIA - DAY

225

AKEEM'S ROYAL LIMO waits outside.

226 INSIDE AKEEM'S LIMO - DAY

226

Akeem is despondent. Semmi tries to cheer him up.

SEMMI
Look at it this way. At least
we learned how to make french
fries.

Akeem stares out the window, lost in thought.

227 OUTSIDE THE HOTEL - DAY

227

The Queen and King get into the KING'S ROYAL LIMO.

228 INSIDE THE KING'S ROYAL LIMO - DAY

228

KING
I am looking forward to being
home.
(the Queen is silent)
You are still not speaking to me.

QUEEN
I only want our son to be happy.

KING
I do, too. Aoleon, please. It
is out of our hands. The girl
told him no.

QUEEN
After the way you treated her,
who can blame her.

KING
Even if she said yes, they still
could not marry. It is against
the tradition.

QUEEN
Well, it is a stupid tradition!

KING
Who am I to change it?

QUEEN
I thought you were a king.

CUT TO:

229 INT. THE ROYAL BALLROOM, ZAMUNDA - DAY

229

The royal wedding is in progress, a ceremony so splendidiferous it makes Princess Di's shindig look like a backyard affair.

Akeem waits glumly at the altar.

REGAL MUSIC plays as his bride walks down the aisle, a beautiful vision in white, her face concealed by a veil.

The bride reaches the altar. Akeem takes her hand. She lifts her veil, but it is not Imani -- It is Lisa. Akeem is overjoyed.

He looks at his parents, who smile knowingly. He kisses Lisa.

(CONTINUED)

229 CONTINUED:

229

OHA
(whispering)
Your Highness, we have not come
to that part. Your Highness ...

Akeem pays her no mind.

230 EXT. THE ROYAL PALACE, ZAMUNDA - DAY

230

Joyful BELLS ring in the tower as we CRANE DOWN to reveal masses of WELL WISHERS who have gathered in the streets. Doves of uniformed SOLDIERS are assembled wearing plumed hats. Elegant horse-drawn carriages await the wedding party.

The doors of the chapel open. Akeem and Lisa emerge. The newlyweds smile and wave to the crowd. A huge CHEER goes up.

The King and Queen walk out of the chapel, accompanied by Mr. McDowell who looks very dapper in his grey cut-away morning coat. Mr. McDowell waves to the cheering fans, having the time of his life. The CROWD ROARS again as Mr. McDowell raises the King's arm in a gesture of triumph. The King brushes him away * with his royal fly wisk.

Patrice and Darryl are among the wedding quests, very much a couple. Clarence (Eddie), Sweets, Morris (Arsinio) and The Old Jewish Man from the Barber Shop are there having a wonderful time.

231 ANGLE ON SEMMI AND IMANI

231

Semmi, dressed as the best man, is standing on the steps beside Imani Izzi, the young woman Akeem was to have married.

SEMMI
(flirting with her)
I suppose this means you will be
able to date.

IMANI
(coyly)
Perhaps.

SEMMI
(firmly)
Then you will go with me to the
ball.

IMANI
Ask me nicely. I do not have to
take orders from you.

(CONTINUED)

231 CONTINUED:

231

Semmi's courage falters, but his smile remains.

232 ANGLE ON AKEEM AND LISA

232

They get into a magnificent carriage drawn by a team of white horses. They wave to the CHEERING throng.

LISA

Would you really have given all
this up for me?

AKEEM

Of course.

(teasing)

If you want, we can give it up
right now.

LISA

(smiling)

Nahhh.

They kiss.

233 THE ROYAL PROCESSION

233

moves through the gates of the palace and onto the street,
passing by a vacant lot where a sign is erected. It says,
"COMING SOON ... ANOTHER FINE McDOWELL'S RESTAURANT."

234 SUPERIMPOSE CLOSING CREDITS

234

as the royal procession wends its way through the cheering
crowd.

FADE OUT

THE END